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Trump declares virus pandemic a national emergency

President Donald Trump, right, listens as Dr. Deborah Birx, White House coronavirus response coordinator, speaks during a news conference about the coronavirus in the Rose Garden of the White House, Friday, March 13, 2020, in Washington.

Associated Press

By A. TAYLOR, Z. MILLER, J. COLVIN and L. MAS-CARO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump announced Friday that he is declaring the coronavirus pandemic a national emergency, as

Washington struggles with providing Americans with relief and officials race to slow the spread of the outbreak.

Speaking from the Rose Garden, Trump said, "I am officially declaring a national emergency."

He said it would free up as much as \$50 billion for state and local governments to respond to the outbreak.

Continued on Page 2



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Trump declares virus pandemic a national emergency

Continued from Front

Trump also waived interest on federally held student loans and moved to prop up energy markets, by directing the Department of Energy to buy oil to fill the strategic petroleum reserve "right up to the top." Trump said he was also giving Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar emergency authorities to waive federal regulations and laws to give doctors and hospitals "flexibility" in treating patients.

"Through a very collective action and shared sacrifice, national determination, we will overcome the threat of the virus," Trump said.

He also announced a new public-private partnership to expand coronavirus testing capabilities, as his administration has come under fire for being too slow in making the test available. The partnership will include drive-thru testing in some locations and an online portal to screen those seeking to get tested.

Still, Trump said that officials don't want people taking the test unless they have certain symptoms. "It's totally unnecessary," Trump said. He added, "This will pass."

Trump made no reference to negotiations between the White House and Congress on a broader aid package, as House Democrats prepare to vote on their own measure Friday. Speaker Nancy Pelosi said Friday the House would approve its coronavirus aid package, imploring the Trump administration and congressional Republicans to "put families first" by backing the effort to provide Americans with relief.

The House Democratic leader spoke from the

speaker's balcony at the Capitol ahead of Trump's news conference at the White House, as the power centers of Washington were shuttered to visitors. "Our nation, our great nation has faced crisis before," Pelosi said. "And every time, thanks to the courage and optimism of the American people, we have prevailed. Now, working together, we will once again prevail."

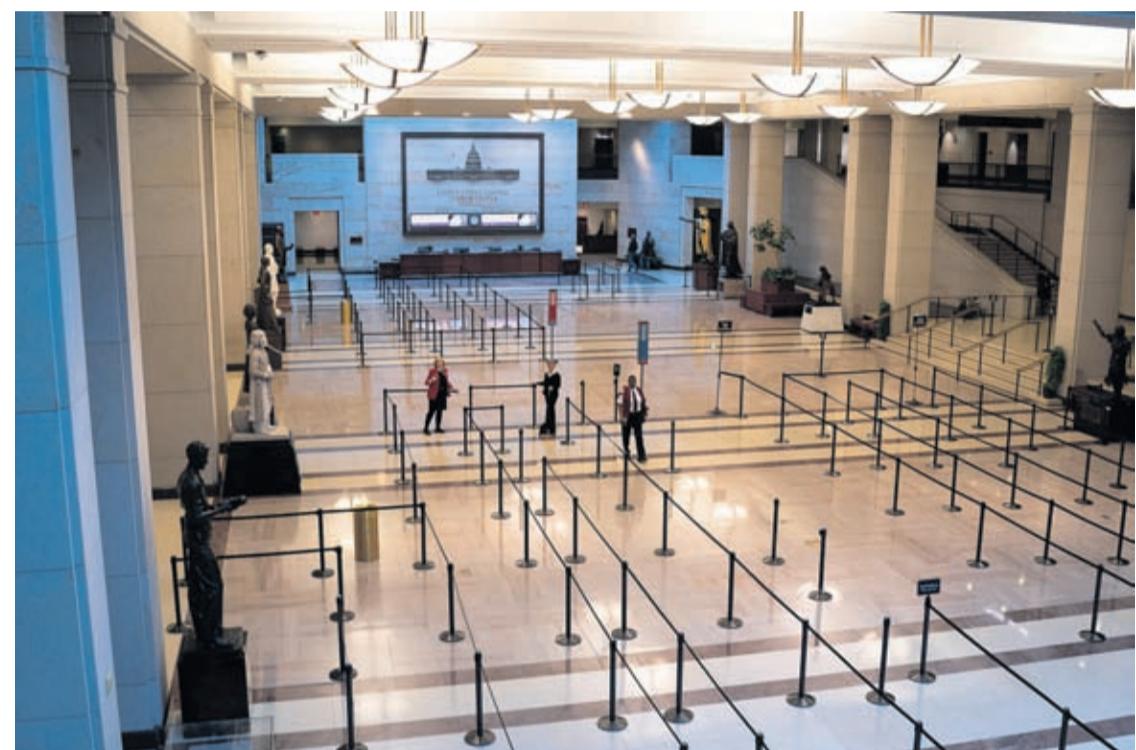
Trump has not yet publicly backed the package, making its outcome uncertain in Congress.

Central to the package is free testing for the virus and guaranteed sick pay for workers who are taking time away from jobs, along with an infusion of dollars to handle unemployment benefits and boost food programs for children, families and seniors.

Pelosi and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, whom Trump tapped to negotiate for the administration, have engaged in around-the-clock negotiations.

But Republican leaders in Congress slowed the deal, wanting assurances that Trump would publicly support the agreement before signing off on it ahead of any vote, according to a top congressional aide unauthorized to discuss the private talks and speaking on condition of anonymity. GOP leader Kevin McCarthy of California, the House minority leader, huddled with Mnuchin and Trump at the White House earlier Friday.

"We can only defeat this outbreak if we have an accurate determination of its scale and scope, so that we can pursue the precise science-based response that is necessary to put families first," Pelosi said. The White House is under



Queues are prepared for tourists at the Capitol Visitor Center amid reports that organized visits may be shut down soon, in Washington, Thursday, March 12, 2020.

Associated Press

enormous pressure, dealing with the crisis on multiple fronts as it encroached ever closer on the president.

The virus has swept in alarming ways across American life, sending the financial markets into a dangerous slide and shuttering schools and sporting events and limiting everyday interactions in communities across the country.

The administration's federal task force managing the crisis was working furiously to break a bottleneck in the nation's ability to test for the new virus, and weighing what sort of emergency powers Trump would need to invoke to provide needed aid to overwhelmed state and local governments.

And a personal health scare intensified as White House officials worked to determine the level of exposure by the president and senior aides to several foreign officials who have since tested positive for the virus.

In one welcome announcement, the administration said Friday it was awarding \$1.3 million to two companies trying to develop rapid COVID-19 tests that could detect within an hour whether a person is positive for the new coronavirus.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

The vast majority of people recover. According to the World Health Organization, people with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to be over it.

Earlier Friday, Mnuchin sounded an optimistic note. "I think we're very close to getting this done," he said in an appearance on CNBC.

On the COVID-19 illness, Mnuchin cautioned that

"people should understand the numbers are going to go up before they go down."

Pelosi and Mnuchin continued their constant cross-town phone calls throughout a tense morning of negotiations to firm up and salvage the emerging deal that has widespread support from Democrats and some in the business community seeking certainty. Providing sick pay for workers is a crucial element of federal efforts to stop the rapid spread of the infection. Officials warn that the nation's healthcare system could quickly become overwhelmed with gravely sick patients, as suddenly happened in Italy, one of the countries hardest hit by the virus.

The ability to ensure paychecks will keep flowing — for people who stay home as a preventative measure or because they're feeling ill or caring for others — can help assure Americans they will not fall into financial hardship. □

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U.S. general: U.S. strikes destroy weapons depots, more remain

By LOLITA C. BALDOR

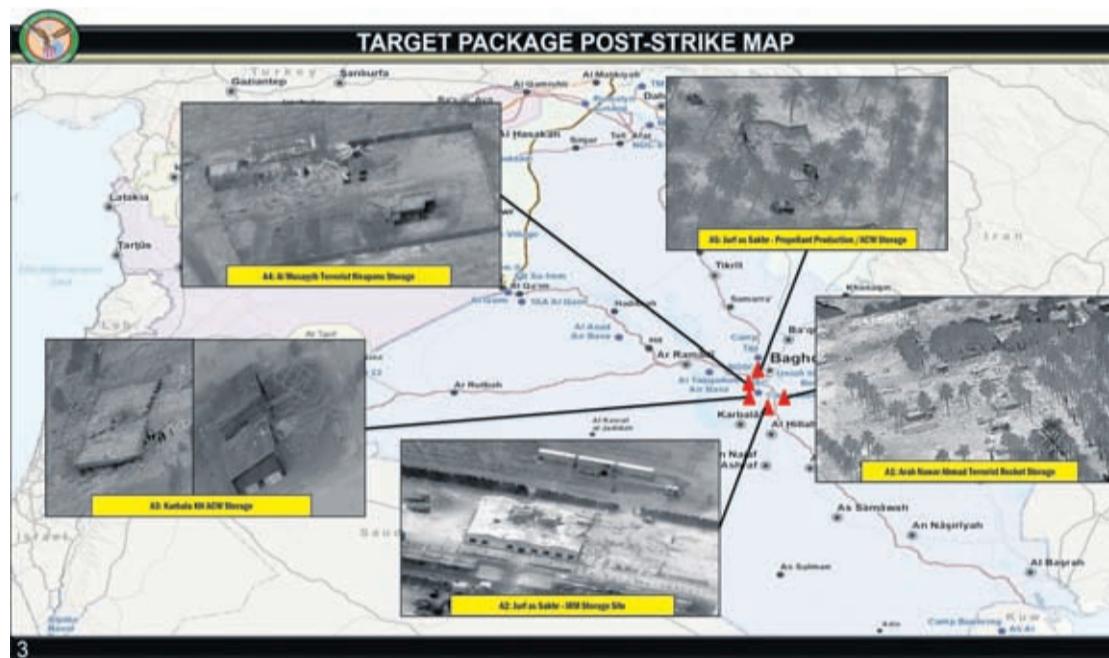
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. retaliatory airstrikes against militants in Iraq destroyed five weapons depots, but the top U.S. commander for the Middle East acknowledged Friday that there are many similar sites that the U.S. has so far not hit because of potential civilian casualties and political sensitivities with the Iraqi government.

Marine Gen. Frank McKenzie said the U.S. decision to target the Iranian-backed Shiite militia group that killed American and British troops in a rocket attack this week sends a strong message to Iran and its proxies. But he said that as the threat of continued attacks remains high and tensions with Iran have not gone down, the U.S. is beefing up military assets in the region.

"What should now be obvious to everyone is you're not going to be able to fire those at a U.S. or coalition base, hurt or kill our people, and escape unscathed," McKenzie told Pentagon reporters Friday. He said the U.S. has been aware of the weapons sites and knows where more are, but has exercised "restraint" in bombing them because in some cases strikes would kill "a lot" of civilians. He said the U.S. works with the Iraq military to take out the sites, but at times that doesn't work.

Kataib Hezbollah, the group the U.S. blames for the Wednesday attack at Camp Taji base that killed two U.S. and one British service members and wound-



This annotated image provided by the U.S. Department of Defense, shows aerial images after U.S. airstrikes in Iraq on Friday, March 13, 2020.

Associated Press

ed 14 other personnel, has not commented on the strikes, but another Iranian-backed group has vowed revenge.

The tit-for-tat strikes potentially signal another cycle of violence between Washington and Tehran that could play out inside Iraq. And they threaten to hamper ongoing U.S. negotiations with the Iraqi government to keep American troops in the country.

In fact, Iraq's military said three Iraqi army commandos and two federal police officers were killed in the U.S. strikes. And a Shiite endowment in the holy city of Karbala said one civilian in an airport complex being constructed by the endowment was also killed.

Asked about the Iraqi deaths, McKenzie said the U.S. talked with the Iraq military and they knew the U.S. attack was imminent. No Americans

"If Iraqis were there and Iraqi military forces were there, I would say it's probably not a good idea to position yourself with Kataib Hezbollah in the wake of a strike that killed Americans and coalition members."

Due to the ongoing threat, McKenzie said Defense Secretary Mark Esper has agreed to keep two Navy aircraft carriers — the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower and the USS Harry S. Truman -- in the Gulf region "for a period of time." He said this is the first time since 2012 that the U.S. has had two carriers in the region at the same time.

He also said that Patriot air defense missile systems are being moved into Iraq to provide defenses against ballistic missile attacks like the January strike by Iran that hit an Iraqi air base where U.S. troops were present. No Americans

were killed in that attack but dozens suffered mild traumatic brain injury. Since then, Washington has been negotiating with the Iraqi government to permit the Patriot deployment.

The latest strikes mark a rapid escalation in tensions with Tehran and its proxy groups in Iraq, just two months after Iran carried out a massive ballistic missile attack against American troops at a base in Iraq. They came just hours after top U.S. defense leaders threatened retaliation for the Wednesday rocket attack, making clear that they knew who did it and that the attackers would be held accountable.

"The United States will not tolerate attacks against our people, our interests, or our allies," Esper said. "As we have demonstrated in recent months, we will take any action necessary to

protect our forces in Iraq and the region."

According to the U.S. military, the locations of the strikes were largely around the Baghdad region. The strikes hit weapons storage facilities in Karbala, Al-Musaib, and Arab Nawar Ahmad and a missile storage and propellant production facility in Jurf al-Sakher. Prior to the strikes top U.S. officials, including President Donald Trump and Esper had suggested retaliation was coming. And McKenzie told senators in a public hearing that the deaths of U.S. and coalition troops created a "red line" for the U.S.

Two U.S. troops and one British service member were killed and 14 other personnel were wounded when as many as 15 rockets hit the base Wednesday. The U.S. military said the 107 mm Katyusha rockets were fired from a truck launcher that was found by Iraqi security forces near the base after the attack.

Asked why there were no systems at Taji to intercept the rockets, McKenzie said that such systems are limited and can't be everywhere. He said to put a system there, he would have to take it away from another location where it's also needed.

Kataib Hezbollah was also responsible for a late December rocket attack on a military base in Kirkuk that killed a U.S. contractor, prompting American military strikes in response. That in turn led to protests at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. □



Democratic presidential candidate former Vice President Joe Biden speaks about the coronavirus Thursday, March 12, 2020, in Wilmington, Del.

Associated Press

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Biden virtual town hall marks new normal for campaigning

By SARA BURNETT and BILL BARROW
Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP)— Joe Biden is holding a town hall in Illinois from 800 miles away in Delaware. Bernie Sanders is staging daily news conferences from Vermont, instead of his usual rallies around the country with thousands of supporters. The global coronavirus pandemic has sent the 2020 presidential campaign into a virtual phase. Big rallies and handshakes are out. Virtual phone banks and town halls are the new normal. Political parties and groups are canceling in-person gatherings. States holding primaries in coming weeks have urged more voters to cast ballots by mail and extended hours for early voting centers in an effort to avoid election day crowds. On Friday, Louisiana's governor said he planned to postpone his state's April 4 primary to June.

The Biden campaign scrapped plans for a Chicago rally ahead of Illinois' Tuesday primary due to warnings from public and health officials against large gatherings. Instead, the Democratic front-runner was taking questions Friday in a virtual town hall via Facebook live.

Sanders, Biden's rival for the Democratic nomination, has been holding daily press briefings from his home state, where he has blasted President Donald Trump and his administration's response to the virus. Biden did the same in an address Thursday.

Speaking to reporters Friday, Sanders was subdued — the emotional opposite of the big rallies that have helped fuel his support at the polls. He drew over 10,000 people at a Chicago rally on Saturday, before officials started warning against large events. Sanders said his team has mastered the use of internet campaigning, livestreaming almost all of its events already.

COVID-19 causes only mild

or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough, for most people. It can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia, for some people, especially older adults and those with existing health problems. Most people recover from it. Those with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover, according to the World Health Organization.

With the coronavirus causing a sea change in presidential campaigning, candidates and their supporters worry that the virtual events won't have the same impact.

"We do more rallies than anybody else, and (they're) often very well attended. I love to do them," Sanders told reporters at a hotel in his home state of Vermont. "This coronavirus has obviously impacted our ability to communicate with people in the traditional way that we do. That's hurting." In Chicago, Biden volunteer Lally Doerrer was preparing to have a few other supporters over to her home Friday to watch the virtual town hall. The retiree finished an online MBA program a few years ago and said it helped familiarize her with technology like virtual classrooms and the potential for it to reach many more people than a rally. And while she believes canceling large gatherings is the right thing to do, she doesn't think the virtual events will have the same impact as when people come together in person.

"There is a common physical element that comes from being face to face, or better yet marching side by side, and that's what is lost in this," Doerrer said.

The policy extends to field offices around the country, as well — just as the campaign was looking to build out the campaign toward a potential general election matchup against President Donald Trump. Trump himself has canceled rallies, for now. Biden advises

ers are reluctant to talk about what the coming weeks may look like, mostly because they don't know. They've not announced a public schedule beyond Friday's town hall and a similar event in Miami on Monday, both replacing scheduled rallies ahead of Tuesday primaries.

If anything, those events are tryouts for a new style, while aides continue monitoring public health advisories from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In a staff memo, Anita Dunn, Biden's top strategist, and Jen O'Malley Dillon, his new campaign manager, said that as of Thursday, that guidance still suggests that "small gatherings are safe," as long as no exposed persons participate. "We will continue to hold smaller events like roundtables, house parties and press statements," besides the virtual events.

It's not the first time this election cycle that candidates have had to get creative about reaching voters. Stuck in Washington for Trump's impeachment trial in the weeks before the kickoff Iowa caucuses, Sens. Elizabeth Warren and Amy Klobuchar held telephone town halls with Iowa voters, and Sen. Bernie Sanders held nightly online chats where he spoke to supporters via live stream, offering updates on the impeachment trial and his campaign.

Klobuchar, who said over 12,000 Iowa voters participated in one of her telephone town halls, also spoke via phone to voters in New Hampshire, the second state to vote. Warren held similar calls with voters in New Hampshire and South Carolina ahead of those states' primaries, as she campaigned elsewhere. She suggested later while campaigning in person that she'd reached thousands of voters that way, but her campaign never released figures on how many people actually dialed in. □

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Supreme Court petitioned on police officers' legal immunity

By MATTHEW BARAKAT

Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Va. (AP) — James King had no idea that the men who grabbed him and took his wallet were plainclothes officers looking for a fugitive. So he ran off.

And when they caught him, he took a monstrous beating.

Bystanders also were confused. One called 911 to report the beating, telling a dispatcher: "They're going to kill this man."

King, 27, was a college student at Grand Valley State in Michigan in 2014 when he was beaten.

He sued the officers who arrested him, but a judge tossed out the case, ruling that the officers were entitled to immunity for their actions.

King's case is one of several taken up by the Arlington-based Institute for Justice in an effort to get the U.S. Supreme Court to reconsider the "qualified immunity" doctrine, which frequently shields police officers and other government agents from lawsuits when they are accused of violating a person's constitutional rights.

"The biggest problem is, these doctrines have no basis in the history of this country," said Anya Bidwell, one of King's lawyers with the institute.

"They are inconsistent with our founding principles."

The qualified immunity doctrine was first enunciated by the Supreme Court in 1967, and expanded greatly by the court in the 1980s.

As it currently stands, officers can only be held liable for their actions if a court has previously found officers liable in an analogous circumstance, Bidwell said. The Institute also has petitioned the high court



This undated photo provided by Institute for Justice shows James King.

Associated Press

to take the case of Shani West, whose home in Caldwell, Idaho, was destroyed by officers looking for her ex-boyfriend. They hope to learn as soon as later this month whether the justices will review the cases.

One of the officers sued by King is an FBI agent who was participating in a federal-local task force in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The FBI and a Grand Rapids spokesman declined comment.

A spokeswoman for the City of Caldwell did not respond to an email seeking comment.

In a phone interview, King said he feels lucky to be alive after being beaten by officers who seemed unfazed by the fact that bystanders were witnessing the attack in broad daylight.

He said one of his lawyers told him that if he'd been black, he would have been killed.

"I thought I was going to be killed," he said. "And there are people all over the

country who deal with this on a daily basis."

King was charged with resisting arrest and assaulting a police officer.

Court records indicate he bit one of the officers who had him in a chokehold.

A jury acquitted King on all charges.

Justices have signaled some interest in the topic.

In 2017, Justice Clarence Thomas wrote that the court should find an appropriate case to reconsider the doctrine.

As with other elements of criminal justice reform, a left-right coalition of liberals concerned about police abuse and conservatives concerned about unaccountable government has emerged to agitate for change.

While there is strong momentum for reconsidering the qualified immunity doctrine, it has its defenders. In a Notre Dame Law Review Journal titled "A Qualified Defense of Qualified Immunity," professors Aaron Nelson and Christopher Walker write that the doctrine

ments also support the immunity, arguing that police need a measure of protection to do their job without looking over their shoulders. Lisa Soronen, executive director of the State and Local Legal Center, which advocates for local governments before the Supreme Court, said qualified immunity is key to the financial solvency of state and local governments which could otherwise be overwhelmed by lawsuits.

Also, it's important for officers to know they have some legal protection on the job, she said.

"You don't want an officer hesitating," she said. "They have to act in these hard situations."

She said the doctrine has been under attack since it was targeted by a libertarian think tank, the Cato Institute.

But she said changing a doctrine that has stood for decades could end up confusing the immunity issue rather than clarifying it.

"Relaxing the idea may sound like a good idea, but where do you draw the line?" she asked. □

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Census faces challenges as it aims to hire up to 500,000

By M. SCHNEIDER and

A. KASTANIS

Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — The U.S. Census Bureau said it has reached its goal of recruiting more than 2.6 million applicants for the once-a-decade head count that launched for most of America this week — but it has been a bumpy road getting there.

The nation's abundance of jobs has complicated the effort, and some rural areas — particularly in New England, Appalachia and some Rocky Mountain states — are falling behind recruitment goals as the agency works to hire up to a half-million temporary workers before May. Falling short could threaten the count in some parts of the country, which in turn could lead to underrepresentation in Congress and less federal funding.

An analysis by The Associated Press shows how low unemployment has affected the bureau's ability to attract workers, with urban counties, especially large ones, more likely to hit recruitment goals than rural areas. The bureau has yet to account for how hiring could be affected by novel coronavirus concerns. The virus may dampen workers' enthusiasm for going door to door, but it could also create a new application pool of workers who have been laid off.

While the bureau has reached its recruiting goal nationally, hiring has varied widely from place to place. States with populations concentrated in large metro areas — Georgia, Illinois, Maryland and Nevada — have overrecruited. Mostly rural states with high numbers of older residents — Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire and West Virginia — are well below recruitment goals.

If the bureau can't find enough applicants in those areas, "it may have difficulty hiring enough staff to complete upcoming operations, leading to delays, increased costs and eroded data quality," J. Christopher Mihm of the Govern-



In this Oct. 2, 2019 file photo, Joyce Dalbey, left, with the U.S. Census Bureau, talks to attendees at the Yuma Community Job & Education Fair inside the Yuma Civic Center about possible job opportunities with the federal agency, in Yuma, Ariz.

Associated Press

ment Accountability Office said during a congressional hearing last month.

"Recruitment and hiring success in one area may provide little advantage to an area where efforts are lagging," Mihm said. "The census, while a national effort, is implemented locally in communities and neighborhoods across the country."

Most of the workers will be hired to knock on the doors of households whose residents haven't responded by May to the census either online, by telephone or through the mail in what is the federal government's largest peacetime mobilization. The Census Bureau hopes to hire people from the areas they will be working in because they know their communities best.

In Vermont, part of the problem is the number of jobs. Its unemployment rate was just 2.4% at the end of 2019.

"Vermont is a rural, small state, and I know we have one of the lowest unemployment rates in the nation," said state librarian Jason Broughton, who is chairing a committee on encouraging census participation. "That plays a huge factor. A lot of people already are working two or three jobs, so everybody is already working."

The extremes in recruiting

County, Wyoming — home of the Jackson Hole ski area — and Clayton County, Georgia, in metro Atlanta, home of the world's busiest airport. In Teton County, the Census Bureau reached below 17% of its recruiting goal as of Feb. 24. In Clayton County, home to Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, the bureau had recruited more than double its goal.

Census Bureau officials insist there's no reason to be worried. As of the end of February, there were more than 22,500 temporary workers on the payroll, the bureau reported last week. On Thursday, more than a dozen Democratic U.S. lawmakers from New York

asked the department overseeing the U.S. Census Bureau to extend the period for conducting the count because of the spreading coronavirus. Another group of House members, as well as the agency's own inspector general, asked for details on the Census Bureau's coronavirus plans.

"We are particularly concerned about the impact on hard-to-count communities, which the Census Bureau has acknowledged are more likely to respond to in-person census enumerators, rather than to census forms completed by mail or online," said the letter from Democratic Reps.

David Price, Jose Serrano, Carolyn Maloney and Jamie Raskin.

The 2020 census started this week with the online questionnaire going live, and it is supposed to end in July. In response to coronavirus concerns, the Census Bureau said this week, "It has never been easier to respond on your own, whether online, over the phone or by mail — all without having to meet a census taker." Some advocates leading census outreach efforts on Friday worried that the coronavirus would lead some census takers to quit their jobs, said Jeri Green, 2020 census senior advisor for the National Urban League.

There are at least three recruits for every position in every part of the country, and in some parts, there are four or five applicants, Census Bureau Director Steven Dillingham told lawmakers last month.

"We are not behind," Dillingham said.

The census helps determine the allocation of \$1.5 trillion in federal spending and how many congressional seats each state gets. For the first time, the bureau is encouraging most people to fill out their forms online. Finding such a large, temporary workforce in the current labor market had been a formidable challenge, U.S. Commerce Secretary

Wilbur Ross, whose department oversees the Census Bureau, testified before a Senate committee last week. But he said the bureau had reached out to college students, previous census-takers and private companies like Walmart that have a large number of temporary workers.

"I feel quite comfortable that we will accomplish what we need to," Ross said.

After recruiting efforts hit a plateau last December, the Census Bureau increased its hourly wages by around \$1.50 in almost three-quarters of U.S. counties. The hourly wages now range from \$14 to almost \$30 an hour, depending on the city, with workers in California, Chicago and the Northeast earning the most.

U.S. Reps. Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts and Deb Haaland of New Mexico told Census Bureau officials last month that residents had applied for jobs but never heard back. The two Democrats worried that recruiting and hiring problems would lead to undercounting of hard-to-count communities in their districts, which both have large numbers of minority groups.

That concern was echoed on a recent conference call the bureau hosted to answer questions about the 2020 census. Several callers wanted to know why they hadn't heard anything after they applied for a temporary job.

The Census Bureau says the bulk of the hiring wouldn't start until this month. Kaile Bower, the bureau official who led the conference call, urged callers to follow up by reaching out to their regional office.

In New Mexico, the recruiting shortfall seems most drastic in Hispanic communities and Indian country, Haaland said.

"Those I would say largely are rural communities where the unemployment rate is higher, so I almost feel like that would be a great place to find people," she said. □

Lawyer: Man asleep when police fired on house, killing him

By MICHAEL KUNZELMAN
Associated Press

SILVER SPRING, Md. (AP)

— A Maryland man was asleep in his bedroom when police opened fire from outside his house, killing him and wounding his girlfriend, an attorney for the 21-year-old man's family said Friday.

The Montgomery County Police Department said in a news release Friday that Duncan Socrates Lemp "confronted" police and was shot by one of the officers early Thursday. Rene Sandler, an attorney for Lemp's relatives, said an eyewitness gave a "completely contrary" account of the shooting. She said police could have "absolutely no justification" for shooting Lemp based on what she has heard about the circumstances.

"The facts as I understand them from eyewitnesses are incredibly concerning," she told The Associated Press.

The warrant that police obtained to search the Potomac home Lemp shared with his parents and 19-year-old brother doesn't mention any "imminent threat" to law enforcement or the public, Lemp's relatives said in a statement released Friday by their lawyers. Nobody in the house that morning had a criminal record, the statement adds. "Any attempt by the police to shift responsibility onto Duncan or his family, who were sleeping when the police fired shots into their home, is not supported by the facts," the statement says.

A police department spokesman didn't immediately respond to the statements by the family or their lawyer.

The department's news release on Friday says tactical unit members were serving a "high-risk" search warrant around 4:30 a.m. when one of the unit's officers fatally shot Lemp.

Police detectives recovered three rifles and two handguns from the home. Lemp was prohibited from possessing firearms, police said.

"Detectives were following up on a complaint from the public that Lemp, though prohibited, was in possession of firearms," the release says without elaborating.

Sandler said the family believes police fired gunshots, not a flashbang or other projectile, from outside the home, including through Lemp's bedroom window, while he and his girlfriend were sleeping. Nobody in the home heard any warnings or commands before police opened fire, she said.

"There is no warrant or other justification that would ever allow for that unless there is an imminent threat, which there was not," Sandler said.

The police department's news release says the "facts and circumstances of the



This 2019 photo shows Duncan Lemp in Venice, Italy.

Associated Press

encounter" are still under investigation. Prosecutors from neighboring Howard County will review the evidence at the conclusion of the investigation.

"An established agreement between the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office and the Howard County State's Attorney's Office stipulates that when an officer-involved shooting involving injury or death occurs in one county, the other county's State's Attorney's Office will review the event," police said.

Lemp was Caucasian, according to Sandler. She did not know the race of the unidentified officer involved in the shooting because she said the officers were wearing masks. The officer was placed on administrative leave, a standard procedure after police shootings.

Sandler said Lemp's grief-stricken family is traumatized. Their statement says they intend to "hold each and every person responsible for his death."

"We believe that the body

camera footage and other forensic evidence from this event will support what Duncan's family already knows, that he was murdered," the statement says. Lemp worked as a software developer and was trying to raise money for a startup company, according to friends and co-workers.

"He was a talented, smart guy. Super nice. Didn't deserve to get shot," said Samuel Reid, whose Canadian software company employed Lemp as an independent contractor.

Tsolmondorj Natsagdorj, 24, of Fairfax, Virginia, said he met Lemp in 2016 and bonded with him over their shared interest in cryptocurrency. They also talked about politics. He described Lemp as a libertarian who frequented the 4chan and Reddit message boards, sites popular with internet trolls.

"Duncan was a young guy with a bright future as an entrepreneur," Natsagdorj said. "We was working on things to change the world." □

Police: Gov. candidate in room where crystal meth was found

By CURT ANDERSON
Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — Former Florida Democratic candidate for governor Andrew Gillum is named in a police report Friday saying he was "inebriated" and initially unresponsive in a hotel room where authorities found baggies of suspected crystal methamphetamine.

Gillum, the former Tallahassee mayor who ran for governor in 2018, is not charged with any crime. The Miami Beach police report says Gillum was allowed to leave the hotel for home after he was checked out medically. Gillum, 40, said in a statement that he was in Miami Beach for a wedding and did not use illegal drugs.

"While I had too much to drink, I want to be clear that I have never used



In this Nov. 10, 2018 file photo, Andrew Gillum the Democrat candidate for governor speaks at a news conference in Tallahassee, Fla.

Associated Press

methamphetamines," Gillum said. "I apologize to the people of Florida for the distraction this has caused for our movement."

According to police, fire rescue crews were called to the Miami Beach hotel around 1 a.m. Friday regarding a suspected drug overdose. Police say Gil-

lum and two other men were in the hotel room.

"Mr. Gillum was unable to communicate due to his inebriated state," the police report says.

Police say one of the men came into the hotel room and found Gillum and Travis Dyson, 30, apparently under the influence of an "unknown substance." □

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Accused of abusing 349 children, French surgeon faces trial

By NICOLAS VAUX-MON-TAGNY

Associated Press

SAINTES, France (AP) — A retired surgeon accused of sexually abusing as many as 349 young children over decades — primarily his patients, in their hospital rooms — is facing justice at last, in the worst such case to come to light in France. The trial that began Friday in the western city of Saintes is only the beginning, however.

It concerns four people allegedly targeted by Joel Le Scouarnec, 69, including two of his nieces. Other legal complaints against the doctor have piled up since the original investigation wrapped up, and prosecutors are preparing further action after this trial.

In a pinched, quiet voice, Le Scouarnec identified himself to the judge as the proceedings opened. His face held a closed, emotionless expression. The judge then decided to close the proceedings to the public, exceptionally, at the request of defense lawyers who said Le Scouarnec would speak more freely that way. Some families of victims protested the move, saying the public should hear what the doctor had done.

The first case reached investigators in 2017, when a 6-year-old neighbor told her mother that Le Scouarnec exposed himself and molested her across the



Exterior view of the Courthouse on the opening day of the trial "behind closed doors" of retired French surgeon Joel Le Scouarnec in Saintes, western France, Friday, March 13, 2020.

Associated Press

fence between their properties.

In searching Le Scouarnec's home, investigators uncovered more than 300,000 images of child and other pornography — as well as extensive notebooks where the surgeon detailed sexual violence against both girls and boys from 1989 to 2017. Next to each child's name were comments on the nature of the sexual acts inflicted, according to investigators.

Le Scouarnec admitted to police that he had "already acted out" with children, including his nieces. He said he set limits for himself, and denied any full penetration. He claimed his diaries

included an element of fantasy.

Le Scouarnec's lawyer Thibault Kurzawa said Friday the doctor "intends to explain himself freely" to the court.

The regional prosecutor, Laureline Peyrefitte, told a news conference in December that the number of "potential victims of Le Scouarnec's actions" had reached 349 by that point. Gendarmes questioned 229 of the people named in the notebooks, and by this month, 200 had filed formal complaints, the prosecutor's office told The Associated Press. Many incidents occurred too long ago to prosecute, however.

Investigators say that under cover of medical acts, the doctor sexually took advantage of children as soon as they were alone in the hospital room. They say his strategy was to pass off sexual violence as a professional gesture, and to target patients so young they might not remember or understand what was happening.

He also targeted older children in the operating room, when they were asleep or under anesthesia, according to his diaries.

With victims so young, or unconscious, Le Scouarnec was able to act without aggression or threats, prosecutors say. And so many

years later, there is no way to trace for sperm or DNA. Critics ask why nothing came out before. The surgeon had already been sentenced in 2005 to a four-month suspended prison sentence for possession and importation of a child pornographic image.

The trial opening Friday concerns the neighbor, two nieces, and a child who was hospitalized at age 4 for acute pancreatitis in the establishment where the surgeon practiced.

The father of the young neighbor told reporters Friday that she had wanted to come to the trial. "Our daughter wanted to come and tell him he was mean. She is waiting for answers. She is crying, she knows what's going on today," he said. The Associated Press is not publishing the father's name to protect the girl's identity.

The father said that during Friday's trial, Le Scouarnec "did not look at the victims. When I looked him in the eye, he looked down."

Le Scouarnec faces up to 20 years in prison if convicted. Recent investigations have determined that Scouarnec rubbed shoulders with two other doctors who have been convicted of similar sexual abuse of children, one in the western region of Brittany, where the trial is being held, and another in the southwestern town of Jonzac where he later moved. □

Greece's first female president is sworn in

By ELENA BECATOROS

Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece (AP)

— Greece's first female president, a former high court judge, was formally sworn in to office Friday, nearly two months after the country's parliament voted overwhelmingly to elect her. The swearing-in ceremony for Katerina Sakellaropoulou, 63, took place in an almost empty parliament, as part of measures to prevent the spread of the new coronavirus. Only a handful of officials and a limited number

of journalists were present. Greece has shut down schools, universities, cinemas, theaters, gyms and nightclubs, and authorities have warned people to stay home and avoid large gatherings in an effort to contain the outbreak. The country so far has 117 confirmed cases and one death. The ceremony was being covered live on state television.

After the swearing-in, Sakellaropoulou lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in the square outside parliament, before a



Newly elected Greek President Katerina Sakellaropoulou takes an oath during the swearing in ceremony at the Greek Parliament in Athens, on Friday, March 13, 2020.

Associated Press

presidential honor guard. Despite the warnings about the virus, a small crowd gathered to watch, standing behind a security cordon across the street. In a brief speech at the presidential palace, Sakellaropoulou spoke of the battle against the coronavirus and the recent migration crisis as the country's two main challenges. Greece must continue to adhere to its democratic principles and the state of law, moving toward "a future of prosperity that will have room for us all," she said. □



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UK departs from Europe in virus response, draws criticism

By JILL LAWLESS
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The United Kingdom stood increasingly apart Friday as countries across Europe and around the world shut schools and universities, scrapped sports tournaments and shuttered bars and restaurants in response to the new coronavirus.

The British government has not restricted the everyday activities of U.K. residents by banning large public gatherings or suspending transit networks. More than 60,000 horse-racing fans packed a course in England on Friday for the final day of the Cheltenham Festival, one of the few sporting events in Europe still taking place.

Pupils in Northern Ireland attended classes as usual at St. Columban's primary school in the village of Belcoo. Yet a little more than 2 miles (3.2 km) away, across the border in the Irish Republic, the local St. Patrick's school was closed. So was every other school and all the colleges, daycare centers and cultural institutions in Ireland. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has described the worldwide pandemic as "the worst public health crisis for a generation." He warned Thursday that "many more families are going to lose loved ones before their time."

Yet U.K. authorities have not introduced the strict "social distancing" measures adopted by neighboring nations. Britons are being urged to wash hands frequently and asked to stay home for a week if they have a persistent cough



A man covers his face with a football scarf as he waits at a tube station in London, Friday, March 13, 2020.

or a fever. As of Friday, the U.K. had 798 confirmed cases of the new virus, an increase of more than 200 from a day earlier. Ten people have died.

Britain's strategy is based on the presumption that most people in the country will eventually get the virus, and severe measures to contain it are unlikely to work.

Patrick Vallance, the British government's chief scientific adviser, said the U.K. was "about four weeks or so behind Italy," where more than 15,000 infections and more than 1,000 deaths were recorded in only three weeks. As more people become infected in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, growing criticism of the government's approach is coming from Johnson's political opponents, from some scientists, and from an increasingly

worried population.

"I think we are in a national emergency," said former Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt, who like Johnson is a Conservative politician.

"I think it is surprising and concerning that we're not doing any (social distancing) at all when we have just four weeks before we get to the stage that Italy is at," Hunt told the BBC. "You would have thought that every single thing we do in that four weeks would be designed to slow the spread of people catching the virus."

British officials insist they are trying to slow the spread of COVID-19 disease, thus lessening chances the health system will be overwhelmed by a sudden spike.

But in contrast to many other countries, Britain has calculated that enforcing social distancing too soon

Piccadilly line
↓ Platforms
5 and 6
Piccadilly Circus
King's Cross
Hammersmith
Rayners Lane
Heathrow ↗

Associated Press

would be counterproductive because people will tire of the restrictions and start to lapse just when the measures are needed most.

In most people, the virus causes mild or moderate symptoms such as a fever or cough. But for some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

If most people become infected and then recover, it builds up "herd immunity" in the population, lessening the impact of future outbreaks.

Worldwide, 135,000 people have been infected and nearly 5,000 have died, but half of those who had the virus have already recovered.

"Our aim is to try and reduce the peak, broaden the peak, not suppress it

completely," Vallance said Friday. "Also, because the vast majority of people get a mild illness, to build up some kind of herd immunity so more people are immune to this disease and we reduce the transmission, at the same time we protect those who are most vulnerable to it."

To some anxious Britons that sounds callous, as if the government intends to let some individuals get sick and die in order to strengthen society. The front pages of most British newspapers carried stark summaries Friday of Johnson's warning the day before: "Many loved ones will die," was the Daily Mail's headline.

Scientists say a pandemic like the current one brings with it difficult choices and tough judgment calls.

Thomas House, a reader in mathematical statistics at the University of Manchester, said that "whether we aim for it or not, herd immunity will happen at some point in the future" once the new virus has run its course. "The aim of policy should be for this to happen with the minimum human cost possible," he said.

Whatever the government advises, the virus has already had a major impact in Britain. Soccer's Premier League canceled matches until April 3. Some universities are moving classes online. Commuters can get rush-hour seats on the London Underground as more people work from home. Hotels, shops and restaurants report business dropping off as tourists cancel their trips. □

In role reversal, Asia seeks to stop virus from coming in

By KEN MORITSUGU and
KIM TONG-HYUNG
Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — From quarantining travelers from overseas to nabbing those sneaking in with fevers, China and other parts of Asia are scrambling to prevent the new coronavirus from coming back to where it first broke out.

Just as the spread of the disease is stabilizing in much of Asia, following a major outbreak in China and sizable ones in South Korea and Japan, it is popping up in new hot spots around the world.

Those three countries announced expanded border controls this week that mimic many of the bans and restrictions placed on China in the early days of the outbreak. China, which didn't have enough protective equipment for its medical workers a few weeks ago, is now donating supplies to Italy, Iran, South Korea and other affected places.

The outbreak is far from over in Asia and could well explode again when restrictions put in place to stymie it are lifted. But the panic that seized the region has shifted to the Mideast, Europe and the Americas as those areas deal with the rapid spread of the virus for the first time.

China reported Friday just eight new cases of the virus in the previous 24 hours, and three were imported from Italy, the United States and the United Kingdom. The number has dropped sharply from a month ago, when the daily figure was in the thousands. Nearly 90 imported cases have been identified in recent weeks. National Health Commission spokesman Mi Feng said this week that the peak of outbreak has passed in China, but that "the fast development of the epidemic overseas has introduced uncertainties."

Just a week ago, South Korea was complaining about a global scurry to block or restrict visitors coming from the country. Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha, in a rare moment of bluntness,

called the moves an unsophisticated reaction by nations with inept quarantine

moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. Some, especially older adults and

from Italy, four of whom had contracted the virus. They allegedly took cold

by other nations to bring back their nationals from Wuhan, the capital of Hubei province, after China cut off commercial air and rail service in a lockdown of the region to restrict the spread of the virus.

A charter flight with 164 passengers arrived in the city of Chengdu this week, following two flights bringing back 311 Chinese citizens to the city of Lanzhou in Gansu province last week. The earlier flights led to a spike in new cases, with Gansu reporting 36 imported ones since they landed.

"We will ... take all necessary measures to ensure the safety and legitimate rights and interests of overseas Chinese citizens," Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said this week.

China has dispatched medical teams to Iran, Iraq and Italy and said it would contribute \$20 million to the World Health Organization in support of its efforts to combat the virus. A nine-person medical team with nine cargo pallets of equipment including lung ventilators arrived in Rome on Thursday night.

China, which bristled at a blanket U.S. ban imposed on non-citizens arriving from China, has chosen to quarantine people rather than ban anyone. President Donald Trump has expanded that ban to several European countries, drawing sharp criticism from the European Union.

Japan's moves to control the epidemic struck a raw nerve in South Korea, where resentment persists over Japan's colonization of the Korean Peninsula in the first half of the 20th century.

After Japan imposed a 14-day quarantine on visitors from South Korea and China, South Korea responded by ending visa-free entry for Japanese citizens and putting them under special screening measures at points of entry.

South Korea has confirmed about 8,000 cases, the fourth highest in the world after China, Italy and Iran. □



In this March 12, 2020, photo, travelers walk out from the international arrival exit at the Capital International Airport terminal 3 in Beijing.

Associated Press

abilities. Now, as new infections have eased at home, South Korea is stepping up border controls to prevent the virus from being reintroduced by travelers from overseas.

Starting Sunday, the country will extend special screening measures to passengers from France, Germany, Spain, Britain and the Netherlands, as well as those who have stopped in Dubai and Moscow in the previous two weeks.

Besides having their temperature checked and filling out health questionnaires, they will download a smartphone app to report their health status daily to authorities. The screening already applied to visitors from mainland China, Hong Kong, Macao, Japan, Italy and Iran. South Korea also bans people coming from Hubei, the province in China with by far the most infections and deaths. For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or

those with existing health problems, develop more severe illnesses such as pneumonia.

The vast majority of people recover from the new virus. According to the World Health Organization, people with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover.

Beijing, which has identified 18 imported cases in the past week, announced it would require anyone arriving from overseas to quarantine for 14 days. Previously, only those from places with serious outbreaks had to do so. Shanghai, with eight imported cases confirmed so far, said late Thursday that people coming from Italy, France, Germany, Spain, Iran, South Korea, Japan and the U.S. would have to do the same.

Police in Beijing say they are investigating a family of eight that returned home

medicine to lower their fevers and falsified their health declaration forms, police said.

The case is one of at least three in China under investigation. South of Shanghai in Zhejiang province, six people who worked in a restaurant in Italy and developed coughs, headaches and fevers before returning are under investigation for failing to report their health condition when entering China, according to Chinese media reports. In the north, the Epidemic Prevention and Control Center in Zhengzhou city said a 30-year-old construction worker who had traveled to Milan via Abu Dhabi falsely reported his foreign travels. It didn't specify how he did so. He has been put in isolation with a fever and police are investigating.

China has begun evacuating its citizens from one virus-hit country, Iran, echoing earlier flights organized

Religious services curbed across Mideast over virus fears

By JOSEPH KRAUSS

Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Religious authorities cancelled or limited weekly prayer gatherings across the Middle East on Friday to help prevent the spread of the new coronavirus as they encouraged the faithful to pray for those afflicted by the global pandemic.

Iran, which is mired in the worst outbreak in the region, meanwhile announced another 85 deaths, pushing its total number of fatalities to 514 amid 11,364 confirmed cases. The real number of cases might be even higher, as questions have been raised about authorities' transparency.

Sudan reported its first case, a man in his 50s who died Thursday after returning from a recent visit to the United Arab Emirates. The east African country is in disarray after the overthrow of President Omar al-Bashir last year, and its infrastructure has suffered from decades of sanctions. Christian, Muslim and Jewish leaders in Jerusalem said services would continue to be held in the Holy Land but moved to limit indoor gatherings after the Israeli Health Ministry said they should not exceed 100 people.

At the Western Wall in Jerusalem, the holiest site where Jews can pray, authorities limited entrance to enclosed areas. But the Western Wall Heritage Foundation, which oversees the site, said there would be no restrictions in the main plaza as it is a "wide, open space."

In recent days the foundation has encouraged people to join in special prayers for victims of the virus, which has infected more than 130,000 people worldwide and caused more than 5,000 deaths.

Israel's chief Sephardic rabbi, Yitzhak Yosef, meanwhile urged people to stop visiting the Western Wall, cancel mass prayers and pray near their homes "until the wrath passes and mercy comes from heaven."

For most people, the coronavirus causes only mild

or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it

Ministry's guidelines, including with Sunday services. It invited everyone to pray for "those directly and indirectly affected by this ma-

of Lebanon's militant Hezbollah, said in a speech focused on the virus that his Iran-backed group would put all its paramedics and

leased nearly 1,500 prisoners, around 900 of whom were pardoned. The move appeared aimed at preventing the virus from spreading inside detention facilities. It wasn't immediately clear if those released included opposition activists detained as part of Bahrain's yearslong crackdown on all dissent.

Tiny, energy-rich Qatar shut down all cinemas, theaters, museums, children's play areas, gyms and wedding halls overnight.

Pakistan announced that all schools, colleges, universities and seminaries would be closed until April 5. It also postponed an annual military parade. Pakistan has had 28 people test positive, including seven near the border with Iran, where some 4,000 people returning from Iran have been quarantined.

In Iran, state-run TV announced that Ali Akbar Velayati was quarantined at home after testing positive for the virus. He is a close adviser to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's 80-year-old supreme leader.

The outbreak has reached Iran's top officials, with its senior vice president, Cabinet ministers, members of parliament, Revolutionary Guard members and Health Ministry officials among those infected.

In Israel, concerns about the virus may lead to a brief respite from the year-long political deadlock between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his main rival, former military chief Benny Gantz, after three inconclusive elections.

Netanyahu, who is set to face trial on corruption allegations next week, has called for an emergency national government to combat the pandemic, and Gantz has said he is open to the idea. They are expected to hold talks in the coming days.

Israel has reported more than 100 cases, with the numbers ticking up in recent days despite a number of tough measures taken in recent weeks to slow the spread of the virus. □



A firefighter disinfects a square against the new coronavirus, in western Tehran, Iran, Friday, March 13, 2020.

Associated Press

can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia. The vast majority of people recover from the new virus and the COVID-19 illness it causes.

But the rapid spread of the virus has caused worldwide alarm, tanking financial markets, disrupting travel and leading to large-scale shutdowns in some areas. Some 10,000 Muslim worshippers attended Friday prayers at the Al-Aqsa mosque compound in Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem, according to Sheikh Omar Kiswani, the director of the mosque. Most prayed in outdoor courtyards, heeding the advice of Muslim officials who warned against crowding inside the mosques themselves.

A short, 13-minute sermon was devoted to raising awareness on how to prevent the spread of the virus. The site is the third holiest in Islam and the holiest for Jews because it was the location of the Jewish temples in antiquity.

The Latin Patriarchate in Jerusalem called on churches to enforce the Health

leovulence." Hard-hit Iran has already cancelled Friday prayers in major cities, and on Friday Kuwait said all public prayers would be cancelled until further notice. Egypt ordered all mosques to limit Friday prayers, including the weekly sermon, to no more than 15 minutes. The prayers usually last around an hour.

Iraq, which has reported more than 93 confirmed cases of coronavirus and nine deaths so far, has scrapped Friday prayers in the Shiite holy city of Karbala. Iraq's most influential Shiite cleric, Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, whose Friday sermon from Karbala provides guidance for millions, last week urged people to abide by a ban on mass prayers.

In Lebanon, Friday prayers have been temporarily suspended in all Shiite mosques. The country's top Sunni authority has said it is forbidden for anyone with a contagious disease to attend prayers and has urged elderly people and others at risk to pray at home.

Sayyed Hassan, the leader

medical capabilities at the service of the country's health ministry.

"We should consider ourselves at war" against the virus, he said.

Even in the Gaza Strip, which has been under an Israeli and Egyptian blockade since the Palestinian militant group Hamas seized power in 2007, and which has no reported cases, many mosques kept prayers to 15 minutes and urged worshippers to take precautions.

The moves to limit prayers come on the heels of several cancellations of sporting events, conferences and other gatherings worldwide.

Dubai announced that a major horse race planned for March 28 would be held without spectators. The Dubai World Cup is the world's richest purse for horse racing, with a \$12 million prize last year.

Bahrain indefinitely postponed its Formula One Grand Prix motor race, which had been scheduled to take place later this month.

The Gulf monarchy also re-



Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro gives a press conference at the Miraflores Presidential Palace in Caracas, Venezuela, Thursday, March 12, 2020.

Associated Press

US sanctions Russian firm targeting Venezuela's Maduro

Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

— The Trump administration on Thursday hit a second subsidiary of the Russia's state-controlled Rosneft Oil Company with financial sanctions aimed at forcing Venezuela's socialist President Nicolás Maduro from power.

Officials blacklisted TNK Trading International, saying it brokered the sales and transport of large amounts of sanctioned Venezuelan oil, propping up Maduro's illegitimate government.

This measure follows U.S. sanctions a month earlier against Rosneft Trad-

ing S.A. on similar claims. "The Trump Administration remains committed to targeting those who support the corrupt regime's exploitation of Venezuela's oil assets," U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven T. Mnuchin said in a statement.

The U.S. was first among nearly 60 nations to recognize opposition leader Juan Guaidó a year ago as Venezuela's rightful leader. The international coalition considers Maduro illegitimate after 2018 elections widely deemed fraudulent because the most popular opposition candidates were banned from running against him. □



In this Aug. 20, 2019 file photo, former Honduran first lady Rosa Elena Bonilla de Lobo leaves court after her conviction on corruption charges in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

Associated Press

Honduras court overturns 58-year sentence for ex-first lady

Associated Press

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras

(AP) — Honduras' Supreme Court has overturned a 58-year prison sentence against former first lady Rosa Elena Bonilla and ordered a new trial for her. Court spokesman Melvin Duarte said Friday the sentence was overturned because of procedural and

other errors during the first trial. In September, a lower court had convicted Bonilla of embezzling about \$600,000 in government money between 2010 and 2014, when her husband Porfirio Lobo was president. The case was originally brought by the Organization of American States' anti-corruption mission. □

Brazil's President Bolsonaro tests negative for coronavirus



In this handout photo released by Brazil's Presidential Press Office, Brazilian Health Minister Luiz Henrique Mandetta, left, and President Jair Bolsonaro, wear masks as they speak about the new coronavirus during a Facebook Live transmission, in Brasilia, Brazil, Thursday, March 12, 2020.

Associated Press

By DAVID BILLER
Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) —

Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro has tested negative for the new coronavirus, according to a post Friday on his official Facebook profile.

Concern about Bolsonaro's exposure to virus — and possibly that of U.S. President Donald Trump — had grown after confirmation that the Brazilian leader's communications director tested positive. The senior official had joined Bolsonaro just days earlier at a meeting with Trump and senior aides in Florida.

There had been a swirl of confusing information earlier Friday, with some media reporting Bolsonaro had received an initial positive test result. But the president's official social media account later said tests were negative, and also posted a photo of Bolsonaro making an offensive arm gesture to reporters earlier this year. "Don't believe the fake news media!" he wrote in a subsequent post.

Bolsonaro's meeting this week at Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort also included Trump's daughter Ivanka Trump, son-in-law Jared Kushner, Brazil's Foreign Minister Ernesto Araujo

and Bolsonaro's son Eduardo, who is a federal lawmaker, among others. Vice President Mike Pence and Trump's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani also went to Mar-a-Lago that evening.

This week, Bolsonaro told a group in Florida that he believed mainstream media was exaggerating the virus' severity. He reversed course Thursday, wearing a face mask on a live transmission on Facebook from the capital, Brasilia.

On a televised address later, he said the World Health Organization "responsibly" characterized the virus as a pandemic, and tried to dissuade supporters from turning out for mass demonstrations scheduled for March 15.

The rallies "demonstrate the maturity of our presidential democracy and are evident expressions of our liberty. They need, however, to be rethought in the face of these facts. Our health and that of our families must be preserved," Bolsonaro said.

Bolsonaro's health has been a focus since a 2018 stabbing on the campaign trail. Since the assassination attempt, he has already undergone four surgeries with a fifth one upcoming. In December, he was taken

to the hospital after slipping in the bathroom of the presidential residence and banging his head. For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

The vast majority of people recover from the new virus.

According to the World Health Organization, people with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover. In mainland China, where the virus first exploded, more than 80,000 people have been diagnosed and about 60,000 have so far recovered.

Brazil currently has 98 confirmed diagnoses of the virus, but no reported deaths, and is monitoring more than 1,400 possible cases. On Wednesday, the governor of the Brazilian district that includes Brasilia enacted a five-day suspension of all classes, concerts and sporting events that gather more than 100 people in an effort to contain the virus' spread. □

LOCAL



Azure Beach Residences The Villas: Your Own Beach Villa with a Backyard of Green Tranquility



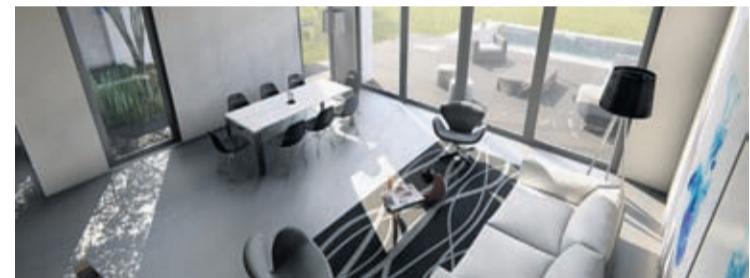
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Developer Pering Group's quality is already visible with Azure Beach Residences (sold for 90 % already) at Eagle Beach and Harbour House Condominiums (sales going beyond expectations) in Oranjestad. Now their newest product is The Villas with the same formula: a quality product for a good price, a trustworthy developer and a prime location. Take a look at this hot opportunity: only six fantastic villas on the border of a bird sanctuary and opposite the white-sand Eagle Beach.

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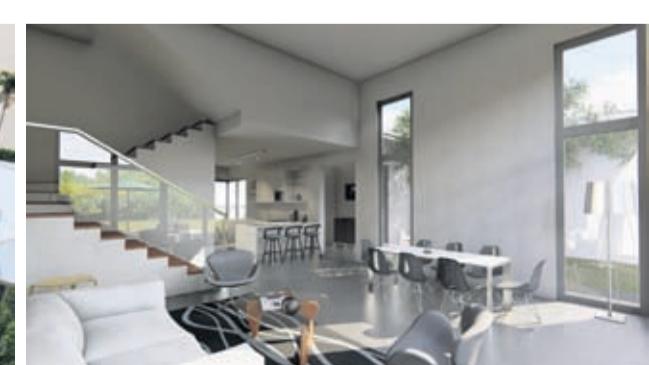
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Birds of Aruba

ORANJESTAD — On May 11th, 2010, the Aruba Birdlife Conservation was founded with the aim of protecting the biodiversity in general and birds in and around Aruba in particular.

Among other things, the foundation will focus on increasing the survival chances of species of wild birds by promoting their preservation and conservation. The foundation publishes the most beautiful pictures of local birds on their social media that show us the beauty of Aruba's birds and nature in general. Aruba Today gives you a little peek with the following pictures and descriptions from the foundations Facebook page.

Aruba's Kinikini



Born for our skies. Aruba's smallest falcon roams open areas for prey, ranging from insects, and small reptiles, mammals and birds. Excesses arising from our unplanned and unregulated tourism sector are also causing Aruba's Kinikini numbers to decline. Yet another conservation plan will have to be developed to try and rescue this beauty from going extinct in Aruba. This masterfully beautiful bird also deserves its place in Aruba's skies and should not go lost due to greed's indifference to our children's future.

A Killdeer at Bubali Wetlands.



Here to stay. Although, these migratory plovers are known to breed in the northern areas of the United States, Aruba now has its own resident breeding colony. They came as tourists ... and never left. The eye makeup is to die for.

Colors of the Warawara



This falcon is an all-rounder. It will hunt in trees, fish in very shallow waters, and run down lizards and if a lizard manages to escape into a tiny crevice, this hunter will dig the lizard out of its hiding place with its claws. Its color patterns are well known, except for the pattern between its wings, which only become visible when it tilts its body while making a sharp turn. A Northern Crested Caracara in flight.

Papiamento: Warawara.
Nederlands: Kuifcaracara.

Bubali Black-bellied Babies.



What an awesome feeling it brings about when a nest of Black-bellied Whistling Ducks is successful. Born at Bubali Wetlands; worth protecting! A proud but cautious parent with nine chicks.

A Purple Gallinule



Nature's Costume Colors. No lack of inspiration once you turn to nature for some color guidance. And getting those feathers right makes all the difference. A Purple Gallinule getting its feathers in tip top shape!

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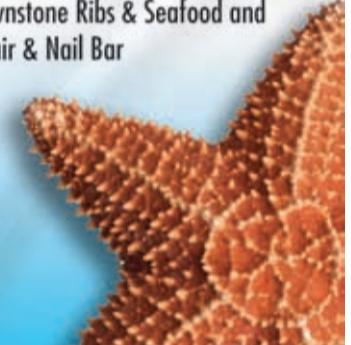
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Goodwill Ambassadors honored at La Cabana Beach Resort

EAGLE BEACH — Recently, Kimberley Richardson of the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure to honor Aruba's loyal and friendly visitors as Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. The symbolic Goodwill Ambassador certificate is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, as a token of appreciation to the guests who visit Aruba 20 years and more consecutively.

The honorees were couple **Max & Inna Ioffe** from New Jersey together with couple Albert & Rita Fries from Philadelphia.

This lovely group of people stated that they love the island very much, especially for its year-round sunny weather, nice sandy beaches and picturesque sunsets, delicious variety of foods, and Aruba's warm and friendly people.

Richardson together with the representatives of the La Cabana Beach Resort & Casino presented the certificates to the honorees, handed over some presents and also thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination and as their home-away-from-home.□





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Aruba Today signs partnership with Aruba.TV



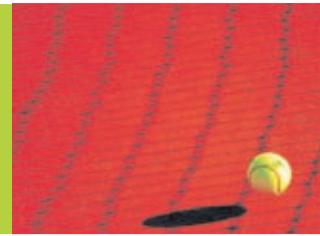
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SPORTS



In this April 17, 2017, file photo, runners cross the Boston Marathon start line in Hopkinton, Mass.

Associated Press

Masters, Boston Marathon postponed due to coronavirus

By BERNIE WILSON
AP Sports Writer

The shock waves from the coronavirus outbreak rattled sports for another day as two rites of spring, the Masters and Boston Marathon, were postponed. There was at least some relief Friday that those events are expected to take place later in the year, unlike the stunning announcement the day before that the NCAA was canceling March Madness, one of the biggest events on the U.S. sports calendar.

"Well, postponed is a comforting word," pro golfer Xander Schauffele said. "Cancelled is another." Golf and car racing came around and called off weekend events, leaving fans with nothing to

look forward to for several weeks. Augusta National offered no details for when the green jacket will be slipped over the shoulders of a new champion, except for Chairman Fred Ridley saying he hopes the postponement puts the club in the best position to safely host the Masters "at some later date."

The Masters had been scheduled for April 9-12. The Boston Marathon, the world's most celebrated footrace, was postponed from April 20 until Sept. 14. Mayor Marty Walsh announced the decision. The Boston Athletic Association, which oversees the marathon, had held off deciding the fate of the race even as other high-profile sports events were canceled or

postponed around the globe.

But pressure had mounted in recent weeks from officials in Boston and the seven cities and towns along the course. Some had expressed worries not only for the health of the 31,000 registered runners but also the estimated 1 million spectators who traditionally line the route, giving athletes hand slaps and even kisses as they pass.

Walsh drew on the city's rallying cry in the aftermath of the bombings that killed three and injured scores of others at the marathon finish line in 2013. "We've shown before that whatever the challenge to our marathon and to our city, we are Boston Strong," he said. "The marathon is

Boston. It connects us. It reflects us. It brings out our community spirit and our resiliency."

The Boston Marathon has never been canceled outright since its first running in 1897, though there was a de facto cancellation in 1918, when the end of World War I and a global influenza pandemic prompted organizers to switch to a relay race format.

Until Friday, not even the Great Depression or ferocious storms had interrupted the 124-year-old race, a bucket list quest for runners worldwide. About a third of this year's runners were from outside the U.S. Friday's announcements didn't come at the same crazy headline-a-minute pace as Thursday. NAS-

CAR and IndyCar reversed course and pulled the plug on racing this weekend, with IndyCar also suspending its season through the end of April/

NASCAR called off Sunday's race at Atlanta Motor Speedway and next weekend's events at Homestead-Miami Speedway. Both events were already scheduled to be run without spectators.

IndyCar was scheduled to open its season Sunday on the streets of downtown St. Petersburg without fans. Formula One also canceled its season opening race in Australia, leaving the first full weekend of global motorsports without a major event.

Continued on Page 18

Masters, Boston Marathon postponed due to coronavirus

Continued from Page 17

If IndyCar resumes in May, the season would begin at Indianapolis Motor Speedway first with a race on the road course and then the showcase Indianapolis 500 on Memorial Day weekend.

"Anything from this point is going to be strange, right now is strange," five-time IndyCar champion Scott Dixon said. "I think that would be a fantastic start because that would mean everything is moving in the right direction, but we don't even know that now. Hopefully we are racing by then." The NBA and NHL have suspended their seasons indefinitely. Major League

Baseball has postponed the start of its season. Colleges have canceled spring sports.

The final three rounds of The Players Championship were canceled after the first round was played without fans.

Major league baseball encouraged players to go home, a day after canceling the rest of the spring training schedule and postponing opening day by at

least two weeks. Ballparks in Florida and Arizona were locked down as the sport considered how to proceed. Teams speculated the season might not start until sometime in May, necessitating a reduced schedule.

Many teams said they planned to close for the weekend and re-open camps Monday. Commissioner Rob Manfred met Friday with the players' association leadership, and a decision was made to encourage players to leave camp in the afternoon. "We don't have a playbook for this," Cleveland Indians President Chris Antonetti said. "We are learning on the fly."

We are taking the approach that we will continue to prioritize the health and wellness of our players, our staff, their families, everyone at the complex, everyone throughout the organization. That is evolving day to day."

College basketball players and coaches from Siena to San Diego State — which finished 30-2 and might have been a No. 1 seed for the first time — were left



In this April 9, 2019, file photo, fans arrive for a practice round that's under a weather warning at the Masters golf tournament in Augusta, Ga.

Associated Press

wondering, what if. Siena won the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference regular-season title and was crowned champion of the conference tournament after the league halted play because of the coronavirus pandemic. Siena hasn't played in the NCAA Tournament in a decade.

"It's tough," said Carmen

Maciariello, the first-year coach at his alma mater in Loudonville, New York. "I think you can always look at it as a teaching moment. When you have a group of guys like we had and kind of the journey we've been on this season, the joy is in the journey. I truly believe we were on the brink of doing something extraordinary, especially as

a first-time head coach, to have these guys believe in me just makes it hard. To ... have it evaporate before your eyes is really hard.

"When it's all said and done, it is for the greater good and you want to make sure everybody is safe," he said Friday. "People are dying, so we have to be mindful of that. There's always a bigger picture." □

NCAA plans to extend eligibility of spring sports athletes



In this March 4, 2020, file photo, Florida's Brock Edge, right, steals second base, beating the tag by Florida A&M infielder Octavien Moyer (15), during the eighth inning of an NCAA college baseball game in Gainesville, Fla.

Associated Press

By DOUG FEINBERG

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The NCAA is planning to extend the eligibility of athletes on spring sports teams by one year to make up for the season lost to the

new coronavirus.

The details of how the extra eligibility will work are still being ironed out. All three NCAA divisions would potentially allow another year for athletes in the 14 spring sports,

which include baseball, softball, lacrosse and golf. The decision comes after the NCAA announced Thursday that its winter and spring championships would be canceled as a precaution against the spread of the coronavirus. Some, but not all, conferences have announced that their spring sports teams would not continue their regular seasons.

"I think for the spring sports athletes, it's a good idea. I like the idea of some kind of a make-good there and that's the way to do it," Big East Commissioner Val Ackerman said Friday. The NCAA Division I Council Coordination Committee sent an email Friday notifying schools of its intention. The proposal is expected to pass.

"Details of eligibility relief will be finalized at a later time," the NCAA said in a statement. "Additional issues with NCAA rules must be addressed, and appropriate governance bodies will work through those in the coming days and weeks."

The NCAA needs to figure out logistics including scholarship limits, roster size and a few other nuances.

The association also is trying to determine what — if anything — it could do for winter-sport athletes. In basketball, many of the top players will have headed to the pros already, so granting another year wouldn't do much for them.

Florida athletic director Scott Stricklin said he plans

to push for legislation that would allow seniors to return to school and for roster exemptions that would help make it happen.

"I think any senior who had a championship opportunity taken away because of this should get another year," he said Friday. "I don't know if the NCAA will take that up. But you have track athletes, you have gymnasts, you have swimmers and divers, and basketball, that what they worked for all year was taken away. I think we should give those kids another year. Whether that happens or not, I don't know."

"Yeah, we'll have that conversation," he said. "That makes a lot of sense and it's the humane, fair thing to do." □

Even Yogi might wonder when it will really be over

By TIM DAHLBERG
AP Sports Columnist

The games are over, at least for now.

There's only so much you can say about that when people are dying and the world is in danger. The playground has always been the place to leave your troubles behind but when no place is really safe, sports can't be either. That includes America's pastime, as painful as that might be.

Baseball may or may not be played again this year. There are no guarantees anymore, and anyone who thinks the major leagues will soon pick back up where they suddenly left off Thursday is either guessing or has a crystal ball that the rest of us have yet to properly study.

That could mean no opening day anytime in 2020, as shocking as that might be. No pennant races, and no World Series to help us get the stink of the Houston Astros off our minds.

The great baseball philosopher Yogi Berra famously declared that it ain't over 'till it's over. Well, it's over, at least for now, after the plug was finally pulled Thursday as games were still being played in Florida.

"It felt like the most meaningless baseball game in the history of the sport," infielder Matt Carpenter said as his Cardinals played the Marlins in Jupiter, Florida. Baseball players are lucky in a way. Unlike college seniors who might miss the only March Madness of their life, they still get paid and still have a chance to play when this all gets better. Not like the guy pouring you a beer or the woman handing you a hot dog. Their jobs are gone, at least for the near future, and the chances of finding something else in a suddenly perilous economy are about as good as they are being picked to sing the national anthem if opening day ever arrives.

Same for the people who guide you to a parking spot, and those who take

your tickets. The security guards, equipment guys, broadcast helpers and many, many others are all in the same boat.

While the rest of us might need help finding something to do other than watching sports, they need help just to live their lives. Kevin Love stood up quickly on the basketball side to pledge \$100,000 for team and arena staff hurt by the loss of NBA games in Cleveland. Expect other NBA stars to do the same kind of thing, and Dallas owner Mark Cuban says he's got a plan to pay his workers even if there are no games. Baseball needs to step up for its people, too, if only because those in the sport understand it's the right thing to do.

"My heart really goes out to the people who are living paycheck to paycheck and for whom this is an economic catastrophe," Seattle owner John Stanton said in Arizona.

Here's hope that Stanton backs his words with his wallet, because a lot of good people will soon be suffering. The official delay is for two weeks, but Stanton said he doesn't have high confidence that the season will begin on April 9 as now planned.

The original plan to start March 26 was made so a World Series Game 6 would not be on election night. Now there's a chance it could come on inaugural day.

No one really knows because as good as baseball is with analytics, even the best numbers people can't say for sure where the virus is or where it will spread. That's not baseball's fault because no one outside the sport seems to know either, mostly because relatively few tests have been done in the United States.

"Testing is a much broader issue than just how it relates to a major league team or a sports team," Cubs president of baseball operations Theo Epstein said. "We're far behind in this country as a whole in testing and so

our stance is that the more testing the better. And we hope our country gets to the point where we can have a lot of testing to better assess the situation and make better decisions going forward."

Until then it's anyone's guess, and the guessing game has just gotten going. So far, no major league players have tested positive for coronavirus, though that doesn't mean it already lurks in clubhouses and on fields.

Indeed, it's already been found everywhere from a movie set with Tom Hanks in Australia to a basketball player in the middle of America. "Man, it's invisible,



A line-up sheet from the previous day's baseball game is posted on the wall of an otherwise empty dugout and ballpark after the cancellation of the spring training baseball game between the Kansas City Royals and the Seattle Mariners Thursday, March 12, 2020, in Surprise, Ariz.

Associated Press

too," Seattle pitcher Kendall Graveman said. "So we're really trying to take precautions. But yeah, it's crazy."

The biggest precaution is being taken by baseball itself, though there was no

real choice. Commissioner Rob Manfred waited until the dominoes started falling in other sports to call things off, then announced a two-week delay that will almost certainly last beyond that. □

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In this Oct. 27, 2019, file photo, Jacksonville Jaguars defensive end Yannick Ngakoue (91) rushes New York Jets offensive tackle Chuma Edoga during the first half of an NFL football game in Jacksonville, Fla.

Associated Press

Jaguars place franchise tag on disgruntled defender Ngakoue

By MARK LONG

AP Sports Writer

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (AP) —

The Jacksonville Jaguars placed the franchise tag on disgruntled defensive end Yannick Ngakoue on Friday, a move that guarantees him more than \$19 million next season.

It's the non-exclusive tag, a one-year tender offer that equates to the top

five salaries at the player's position over the last five years. Ngakoue can negotiate with other teams. Jacksonville has the right to match any offer or receive two first-round draft picks as compensation if he signs elsewhere.

Ngakoue also could refuse to sign the tender and try to force a trade. He announced earlier this month

that he no longer wants a long-term deal from the Jaguars.

The 24-year-old Ngakoue doesn't believe the front office has shown him enough respect considering what he has done since joining the organization as a third-round draft pick in 2016.

Ngakoue's concerns stemmed from former Jaguars personnel chief Tom Coughlin's reign. He hoped a change in leadership would lead to a new contract. But the Jaguars have been slow to negotiate, partly because they are waiting for a new Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Ngakoue has 37 1/2 sacks and 14 forced fumbles in four seasons. The speedy strip-sack specialist made the Pro Bowl in 2017 and was an alternate the past two seasons. He clearly outplayed his \$3.84 million rookie contract. He made \$2.025 million in 2019 — far less than other top play-makers at his position.

Ngakoue insisted the day after the season ended that he's "not going to play for pennies." He had been seeking around \$22 million a year to remain in Jacksonville, but the Jaguars don't seem to consider him a complete or elite defensive end worthy of that much annually.

—Defensive end Dante Fowler was traded to the Los Angeles Rams for two draft picks in October 2018.

—Defensive tackle Malik Jackson and safety Tashaun Gipson were cut to create cap space before free agency last year.

—Linebacker Telvin Smith abruptly quit last May, leaving \$10 million on the table, and eventually retired to avoid getting fined.

—Disgruntled cornerback Jalen Ramsey faked a back injury early last season and forced a trade to the Rams.

—Defensive tackle Marcell Dareus is now a free agent after Jacksonville declined an option in his contract that would have paid him \$19.5 million in 2020. □



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'Right now is strange' - NASCAR and IndyCar call off racing

By JENNA FRYER
AP Auto Racing Writer

NASCAR and IndyCar reversed course Friday and pulled the plug on racing this weekend, with IndyCar also suspending its season through the end of April due to concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic.

NASCAR called off Sunday's race at Atlanta Motor Speedway and next weekend's events at Homestead-Miami Speedway. Both events were already scheduled to be run without spectators.

IndyCar was scheduled to open its season Sunday on the streets of downtown St. Petersburg without fans. Formula One also canceled its season opening race in Australia, leaving the first full weekend of global motorsports without a major event.

Mark Miles, president and CEO of IndyCar parent company Penske Entertainment, said the about-face came as both IndyCar and NASCAR saw more and more events and attractions closing. He cited the cancellation mid-tournament of The Players Championship and the closure of theme parks as indicators public gatherings should not proceed.

"There's a public health risk any time people are getting together," Miles said. "Really, there isn't a sporting event left that feels comfortable running even without fans. ... We just felt like it was the right thing to do to not allow the opportunity for the racers to go racing here."

It takes six to eight weeks to build a street course, which shuts down large portions of the host city. It is unlikely that St. Petersburg can host the event later this year because of the permits required.

Miles also said the Grand Prix of Long Beach, scheduled for April 19, was officially canceled for 2020.

It was unknown what will happen to races in Birmingham, Alabama, and at Circuit of the Americas in Texas, two of the four April races canceled Friday by IndyCar.



In this March 11, 2018, file photo, Alexander Rossi (27) and Marco Andretti (98) race through Turn 10 during the IndyCar Firestone Grand Prix of St. Petersburg, in St. Petersburg, Fla.

Associated Press

"From our perspective, our hope, our ambition, our plan is to restart in May and to get in as much of a season as we can," Miles said. If IndyCar resumes in May, the season would begin at Indianapolis Motor Speedway first with a race on the road course and then the showcase Indianapolis 500 on Memorial Day weekend. "Anything from this point is going to be strange, right now is strange," five-time IndyCar champion Scott Dixon said. "I think that would be a fantastic start because that would mean everything is moving in the right direction, but we don't even know that now. Hopefully we are racing by then." Officials at Indianapolis Motor Speedway, now owned by Roger Penske, said in a statement they were working with public health officials about racing in May. The Indy 500 draws crowds of more than 300,000.

"Currently, we don't expect any disruptions to our month of May schedule, including the Indy 500," the speedway said. "Our opening day is nearly 60 days away, which gives us time to continue gathering expert advice and evaluat-

ing the most up-to-date information available."

Seven-time NASCAR champion Jimmie Johnson supported the cancellation of immediate racing.

"We want to race as much as you want us to race but this is the right decision," Johnson wrote on Twitter. "This is so much bigger than sports right now and the health and safety of our fans, industry members and the overall public is top priority."

IndyCar driver Alexander Rossi issued a statement in which he called the decision "a bummer."

"I share in the disappointment with all the fans and pro athletes across the globe," Rossi said. "But let's work through this together, be good (intelligent) humans, and come back to have some fun in a couple months."

Defending IndyCar series champion Josef Newgarden received word of the cancellation standing in the lobby of his hotel just a few feet from the entrance to the street course.

"Crazy times we are living in, man. Crazy times," Newgarden said.

NASCAR said the decision

to postpone the next two weeks "is in the best interest of the safety and well-being of our fans, competitors, officials and everyone associated with our sport."

As NASCAR haulers pulled out of the Atlanta Motor Speedway, nearby campgrounds usually filled with fans making a weekend out of the race were still lined with recreational vehicles.

"Well, all the grocery stores are full of people panicking, and if I get home there ain't nothing to do but to be locked up at home, so I might as well sit out here," said Mike Crowe of Conyers, Georgia, about an hour's drive. "I've got a camper full of beer and food and satellite TV, so I can just camp and make the best of it."

Crowe, a retired fireman, offered lukewarm support of the decision to postpone the race.

"Well, I wish they would have held the event, I really do, but I guess I have to support them," he said. "They've probably got more information than I do about this stuff. I'm just disappointed."

Stacy Jones, who said he's

had the same camping spot for almost 10 years, said he wasn't too disappointed since he had expected Sunday's race to be rained out.

"They told us our money will go toward next year's event," Jones said. "We come every year anyway. We just won't have to pay next year."

As college and professional sports leagues canceled events or postponed their seasons one by one, NASCAR, IndyCar and F1 were among the very few organizations planning to press ahead this weekend. Finally, even the prospect of staging races without fans was deemed to be unsafe. There was no announcement from either NASCAR or IndyCar on rescheduling races.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

The vast majority of people recover from the new virus within a few weeks. □

Parlow Cone takes over at U.S. Soccer at critical juncture

By ANNE M. PETERSON
AP Sports Writer

New U.S. Soccer President Cindy Parlow Cone's first challenge will be to confront the fallout over the federation's widely condemned legal stance in the gender discrimination lawsuit filed by the women's national team.

The first woman president in the 107-year history of the governing body will also oversee the appointment of a new chief executive and early preparations for the 2026 World Cup.

A former national team midfielder who became the federation's vice president last year, Parlow Cone took on her new role Thursday when President Carlos Cordeiro abruptly stepped down.

Cordeiro was facing a growing outcry from players, board members, supporters and sponsors over assertions made in court documents filed this week. USSF lawyers suggested the women's team was inferior because the players had fewer responsibilities and less physical skill than male national team counterparts.

Former teammates rallied in support of Parlow Cone, who has the unenviable task of damage control.

"I have known Cindy Parlow Cone for over two decades as both a teammate and friend. She has always led with integrity and a commitment to others. I have no doubt that she will dedicate herself to making our game better for all," Mia Hamm said on social media.

Fellow teammate Julie Foudy wrote: "I played with Cindy for many years. I know Cindy. She understands ALL the players are

going through having lived it. And she is one hell of a human. Give her a chance

complete Cordeiro's term, which runs until the regular election for a four-year

lawsuit filed by women's national team players last year.



In this Dec. 6, 2019, file photo, Cindy Parlow Cone, vice president of the U.S. Soccer Federation, attends a meeting of the organization's board of directors Friday, Dec. 6, 2019, in Chicago.

Associated Press

to succeed. Please."

Now 41, Parlow Cone scored 75 goals in 158 appearances for the U.S. from 1995 to 2006, winning the 1999 World Cup and two Olympic gold medals with the team. She retired because of post-concussion syndrome.

She was coach of the Portland Thorns during the National Women's Soccer League's inaugural season in 2013, leading the team to the league's first title before stepping down to spend time with her family. She was elected to the National Soccer Hall of Fame in 2018, and was voted in as USSF vice president in 2019.

Parlow Cone will serve as president until the federation's annual general meeting next February. An election will be held then to

term in 2022.

Parlow Cone takes on the presidency at a critical juncture. USSF is currently conducting a search for a new CEO to replace Dan Flynn, who retired last September. Brian Remedi is currently serving as chief administrative officer in addition to chief stakeholder officer.

The federation is also in the midst of early preparations for the 2026 men's World Cup with Canada and Mexico. An expanded field of 48 teams will play in 16 cities across the three countries.

But her most pressing issue is to contain the furor over the USSF's legal stance in documents filed Monday in federal court in Los Angeles. The documents were filed in connection to the gender discrimination

The players say they have not been paid equally to the men's national team and asked for more than \$66 million in damages under the Equal Pay Act and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. A trial is scheduled for May 5.

Sponsors including The Coca-Cola Co., Anheuser Busch Cos. Inc., The Procter & Gamble Co. and Volkswagen Group issued statements in support of the women's team. MLS Commissioner Don Garber, a USSF board member, said he was "shocked and angry" over the arguments and Parlow Cone herself denounced the legal stance on Twitter.

National team players silently protested by wearing their jerseys inside out in warmups before a match against Japan on

Wednesday night in Texas. The move obscured the U.S. Soccer crest but still revealed the team's four stars for its Women's World Cup championships.

Cordeiro apologized for the stance, saying: "I did not have the opportunity to fully review the filing in its entirety before it was submitted, and I take responsibility for not doing so. Had I done so, I would have objected to the language." But it was too late.

In her only public statement since becoming president, Parlow Cone thanked Cordeiro for his service to soccer. Cordeiro, formerly the organization's vice president, was elected president after Sunil Gulati resigned because the men's team failed to qualify for the 2018 World Cup in Russia.

"The passion that has come to the surface in the past two days is what inspires me to look forward, to work hard towards mending relationships and moving the game forward for all," she said in a statement issued by the federation.

Former U.S. goalkeeper Hope Solo, a vocal critic of U.S. Soccer, said she hoped the change at the top leads to change within the organization.

"This blatant disrespect and sexist attitude toward the women's team is nothing new. It didn't start with Carlos and won't end with his resignation," Solo said. "It's been in place for decades, was perpetuated under Sunil Gulati and was tolerated by so many within the organization. For meaningful change to happen, it has to be institutional. Carlos cannot just be a scapegoat for U.S. Soccer's PR strategy." □

Chiefs cornerback Ward gets biggest performance-based bonus

NEW YORK (AP) — Chiefs cornerback Charvarius Ward earned the most in the NFL's performance-based pay program, getting an additional \$654,750 out of an overall pot of just under \$148 million. Ward, who was not selected in the 2018 draft, received nearly 15% more than his 2019 salary of the

league minimum for second-year players (\$570,000). He started all 16 games during Chiefs' championship season, playing in nearly 95% of the Chiefs' defensive plays, as well as almost 26% of the special teams plays. Next on the list was New England center Ted Karras, who inherited the job when David

Andrews was lost for the season. He earned just under \$636,000. Players become eligible to receive a bonus distribution in any regular season in which they play at least one official down. In general, players with higher playing time percentages and lower salaries benefit most from the pools. Over-

all, eight players who were not selected in their draft years made the top 25 in performance-based earnings. The highest-drafted players in the top 25 were third-rounders Richie Incognito of the Raiders — the guard entered the league in 2005 — and second-year tackle Orlando Brown of Baltimore. □

Semenya switches to 200, still aiming to turn up in Tokyo

By GERALD IMRAY

AP Sports Writer

Caster Semenya is looking for another Olympic run.

A different one, too.

Banned from competing in her favorite race and defending her title, the Olympic 800-meter champion is trying to make the Tokyo Games anyway — by switching to the 200 meters. Semenya announced her decision on her Instagram account on Friday, saying her desire "to compete at the highest level of sport" drove her to try to qualify for the Olympics in an unfamiliar race for her.

"This decision has not been an easy one but, as always, I look forward to the challenge and will work hard, doing all I can to qualify for Tokyo and compete to the best of my ability for South Africa," she said.

Under the world track and field body's highly criticized testosterone regulations, Semenya and other female athletes with high natural testosterone are barred from races from 400 meters to one mile at top-level meets like the Olympics and world championships unless they undergo treatment to reduce their hormone levels for six months prior to running.

Semenya has refused to do so, calling the rules and the medical intervention required unfair and unethical. Athletes are given three choices to lower their testosterone: birth control

pills, hormone-blocking injections or surgery.

But the regulations don't apply to the 200 meters and that gives Semenya a chance to run at her third Olympics, even if it's not in the race she wants to run in. It won't be easy.

Semenya has rarely run the 200 meters, and only at lower-level events. She didn't compete at all over the distance between 2016 and early 2019, and she is well off the pace of the world's leading women.

The 29-year-old South African needs to improve her personal best by nearly two seconds just to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics. Her best is 24.26 seconds, in South Africa in February 2019. The Olympic qualifying standard for the women's 200 is 22.80 seconds.

Semenya's PB wouldn't have got her out of the heats at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics.

But at least Semenya has a goal now after being in limbo for nearly a year after making an unsuccessful appeal of World Athletics' testosterone regulations at the Court of Arbitration for Sport last May.

That left Semenya with a choice: Submit to medical treatment to lower her testosterone or stay away from the 800 meters. Defiant, she chose to stay away and hasn't run an 800-meter race since winning at the Prefontaine Classic in June last year, her 31st straight



In this June 30, 2019 file photo, South Africa's Caster Semenya smiles after winning the women's 800-meter race during the Prefontaine Classic, an IAAF Diamond League athletics meeting, in Stanford, Calif.

Associated Press

victory over two laps. She wasn't able to defend her title at last year's world championships.

Semenya's decision to try the 200 may signal she has given up on her second legal challenge against the regulations. That second appeal is still being considered by the Swiss Federal Tribunal and a ruling is due in the coming weeks. She lost her first appeal at CAS last year by a 2-1 majority of the panel of judges. A favorable decision from the Swiss supreme court could still overturn the testosterone rules and allow Semenya to compete in the 800 again without hor-

mone-reducing treatment, but her chances of winning the appeal are seen as slim.

World Athletics' new testosterone rules apply to female athletes like Semenya with conditions known as differences of sex developments (DSDs). Semenya was born with the typical male XY chromosome pattern but also female traits. She was legally identified as female at birth and has been identified as female her entire life, but World Athletics says she is "biologically male" — an assertion she has rejected angrily. World Athletics says higher testosterone gives women

like Semenya an unfair athletic advantage. Semenya's story has been one of the most contentious in sport ever since she arrived as an unknown teenager and won gold at the 2009 world championships amid a gender-test storm. She has won two Olympic titles and three world titles in the 800 meters and is the reigning Olympic champion but has now been barred from running twice in her career. The first time she was sidelined by World Athletics, then known as the IAAF, was in 2009 in the wake of the gender controversy at the world championships. □

Olympic torch relay in Greece suspended because of virus

ATHENS, Greece (AP) —

The Greek Olympic committee suspended the rest of its torch relay on Friday because of the "unexpectedly large crowd" that gathered to watch despite repeated requests for the public to stay away to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

The committee said a large crowd had gathered to watch the flame for the Tokyo Olympics pass through the southern

Greek town of Sparta. The flame for the Tokyo Olympics was lit Thursday at the birthplace of the games in Ancient Olympia in a pared-down ceremony.

"(We took) the difficult but essential decision to cancel the rest of the program of the flame relay on Greek territory," the committee said. The decision was taken in coordination with the health ministry and the International Olympic Committee, it said. The

handover of the Olympic Flame to the Tokyo organizing committee will go ahead as scheduled on March 19 at the stadium in Athens where the first modern Olympics were held in 1896. No spectators will be allowed to attend that ceremony, Tokyo officials said in a statement, but they are continuing their plans for a torch relay in Japan.

"In line with the counter-measure policy set by the



U.S. actor Gerard Butler runs as a torchbearer during the Olympic torch relay of the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games in the southern Greek town of Sparta, Friday, March 13, 2020.

Associated Press

national government, we will work closely with all municipalities and related organisations in Japan to ensure the Olympic torch relay safely begins on March 26," organizers said. □



Pedestrian uses her phone while wearing a face mask in Herald Square, Thursday, March 12, 2020, in New York.

Associated Press

How to clean the bundle of germs that is your phone

By TALI ARBEL
AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — You're washing your hands countless times a day to try to ward off the coronavirus. You should also wash that extension of your hand and breeding ground for germs — your phone. Tests done by scientists show that the virus can live for two to three days on plastic and stainless steel. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends cleaning all "high-touch" surfaces daily, including phones, keyboards and tablet computers.

But cleaning your phone improperly can damage it. You want to avoid getting moisture inside it or scratching the surface. Don't spray cleaners directly on the phone, don't dunk it in cleaning solutions, don't spray it with compressed-air devices used to clean keyboards and avoid rubbing it with abrasive materials.

Instead, start by turning off the phone and unplugging all cables. Your phone shouldn't be charging as you clean.

You can use Clorox wipes

or wipes with 70% alcohol, which you can get at the drugstore, to wipe down your phone. Apple, which has cautioned against using household cleaners on its phones, says to do that "gently." AT&T has further recommended wringing out disinfectant wipes before using them on a phone.

You can also use soft cloths to clean the phone, like a microfiber cleaning cloth or the cloths used to clean your glasses. Google says you can dip the cloth in soap and water, as long as you're careful not to get moisture in the phone. AT&T says paper towels work, too. You can spray them with disinfectant. Again, don't spray the phone itself. The phone-cleaning step is one of many measures public-health authorities are recommending to try to slow the spread of the virus, which has infected 137,000 people worldwide. More than 5,000 have died. Most patients have only mild or moderate symptoms, but the elderly and people with existing health conditions are particularly vulnerable.□



In this Jan. 9, 2019, file photo, media and guests mingle before a tour of Facebook's new 130,000-square-foot offices, which occupy the top three floors of a 10-story Cambridge, Mass.

Associated Press

Facebook takedowns reveal sophistication of Russian trolls

By BARBARA ORTUTAY
AP Technology Writer

Facebook and Twitter revealed evidence Thursday suggesting that Russian efforts to interfere in the U.S. presidential election are getting more sophisticated and harder to detect.

The companies said they have removed dozens of fake accounts and pages from their services.

Facebook said the network of accounts it removed was in the "early stages" of building an audience. It was operated by people in Ghana and Nigeria on behalf of individuals in Russia. The accounts posted about topics such as black history, celebrity gossip and fashion.

Twitter, meanwhile, said the accounts it removed tried to sow discord by emphasizing social issues such as race and civil rights without favoring any particular candidate or ideology.

The tactics the accounts used to avoid detection — and that Russia has essentially outsourced the work to countries in West Africa — shows that foreign interference remains a challenge for Facebook in the months leading to November.

The accounts Facebook took down focused on stoking racial divisions. Some posed as legitimate non-governmental organizations in order to deceive people.

The takedowns follow a report last week that found Moscow's campaign of election interference hasn't let up since 2016, and in fact has gotten more difficult to detect.

That report, from University of Wisconsin-Madison professor Young Mie Kim, found that Russia-linked social media accounts are posting about the same

divisive issues — race relations, gun laws and immigration — as they did in 2016, when the Kremlin polluted American voters' feeds with messages about the presidential election.

Facebook has since removed those accounts as well.

Last month, FBI Director Christopher Wray warned that Russia was still waging "information warfare" with an army of fictional social media personas and bots that spread disinformation. Russia has repeatedly denied interfering in U.S. elections.□

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Business fallout: Apple goes online, Delta slashes flights

By The Associated Press

Apple said its annual developers conference would take place entirely online this year, joining a growing list of companies that are canceling big, in-person events as the coronavirus spreads.

Thousands of engineers and customers attend the Worldwide Developers Conference, or WWDC, which is in its 31st year.

Apple said it would give \$1 million to organizations in San Jose, California, to help with the money they would lose from Apple canceling the in-person event. The event had been held in San Jose for the past few years.

Google and Facebook also canceled their flagship developers conferences in the face of coronavirus health concerns.

Meanwhile, Berkshire Hathaway chairman Warren Buffett told shareholders Friday that they won't be allowed to physically attend the company's May 2 annual meeting in Omaha, Nebraska, because of the coronavirus threat.

The virus has infected 137,000 people worldwide. Most patients have only mild or moderate symptoms, but the elderly and people with existing health conditions are particularly vulnerable. More than 5,000 have died.

Among other ways the virus is impacting businesses:

FLYING LOW: Delta is slashing its flying by 40% to handle an unprecedented nosedive in air travel demand. It's the largest cut in Delta's history.

CEO Ed Bastian said the



In this May 24, 2018, file photo a Delta Air Lines passenger jet plane, a Boeing 737-900 model, approaches Logan Airport in Boston.

downturn in demand is unlike anything the company has ever seen, not even after the Sept. 11 attacks. He said he's optimistic about getting help from the White House and Congress. But, he said, Delta can't wait for Washington to act, so it is preserving cash and cutting costs.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said Washington will consider aid for the airline industry. "Just as after Sept. 11, we are very committed to make sure that our U.S. airlines have the ability and have the liquidity to get through this," Mnuchin told CNBC.

The federal government provided aid including loan guarantees to U.S. airlines after the terror attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, when the number of people flying also dropped sharply.

GETTING ONLINE: U.S. phone and cable companies say that they won't cut

off home-internet and cell-phone service for people and small businesses that are unable to pay because of the coronavirus pandemic, which is causing workplace shutdowns and layoffs. They'll also waive late fees and make their networks of Wi-Fi hotspots available to the public.

The companies acted at the request of Federal Communications Commission Chairman Ajit Pai, who is also encouraging — but not requiring — them to take further steps to make sure people can stay connected to each other, their schools, jobs and doctors as the country increasingly shuts down.

He suggested that the internet service providers increase and improve their low-cost internet offerings for low-income people, relax their data caps and try to help schools and libraries with remote learning, for

example.

FCC Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel, a Democrat, has called on the FCC to do more to help families whose children's schools have shut down, like beefing up a program that helps schools loan Wi-Fi hotspots to kids stuck at home. The AP has found that 3 million students have no internet access at home.

Some companies are taking additional steps like those Pai suggested. Cable companies Comcast and Cox are boosting internet speeds on their low-cost plans and offering one or two months of free service for new low-income customers. AT&T is waiving fees if people go over home-internet data caps.

The development comes as Ford and General Motors are asking white collar employees to work from home if possible, starting Monday. Factory workers for both

Associated Press

companies still must report. Fiat Chrysler says it's accelerating deployment of remote working.

AT THE MOVIES: AMC Theaters and Regal Cinemas, the country's two largest movie theater chains, plan to fill their theaters no more than 50%. AMC said it would begin the policy Saturday and keep it until the end of April to help facilitate social distancing. In larger auditoriums, the chain will no longer sell more than 250 tickets for a showing.

Meanwhile, The Walt Disney Co. says its shutting down many of its live-action productions, including "The Little Mermaid" and Ridley Scott's "The Last Duel," due to the coronavirus.

It has delayed the releases of several upcoming films, including "Mulan." **IMF STAFFERS SENT HOME:** The International Monetary Fund said Friday that a staff member had tested positive for the coronavirus. As a result, all staffers at the IMF's Washington, D.C., headquarters have been advised to work from home until further notice. The 189-nation lending institution said that the staffer who has been diagnosed was self-isolating and receiving medical care. The IMF said all of its staff missions to European countries with a large number of coronavirus cases had been suspended and only essential travel will be allowed to other countries. Even with headquarters staff working from home, the IMF said the agency remained fully operational in terms of helping its member countries. □

Oil crisis deepens in Libya as losses exceed \$3 billion

ISABEL DEBRE

Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — The oil crisis in Libya is deepening as a blockade of the country's vital oil fields generated losses of more than \$3 billion, the national oil corporation announced late Thursday.

The war-torn country controls vast oil reserves, the biggest in Africa, and typically pumps out 1.2 billion

barrels a day. But its regular oil production ground to a halt in January when tribes loyal to eastern-based forces seized large export terminals and choked off major pipelines, jeopardizing the national economy that relies heavily on oil revenues. The National Oil Corporation reported that production had been reduced to a trickle of 97,500 barrels a day. It warned of

a looming fuel shortage given the government's inability to pay for imports. The country's oil wealth has long been at the center of strife between opposition forces under the command of Khalifa Hifter and the U.N.-backed government based in the capital, Tripoli. By leveraging their control of much of Libya's east and south, Hifter's allies seek to choke off cash flow to their

adversary, the Tripoli-based administration, which runs Libya's central bank.

The bank's monthly statement published earlier this week shows it continues to pay for fuel and food subsidies and holds billions of dollars in foreign reserves. But since January it has withheld salaries from civil servants and eliminated funding for development projects because of the

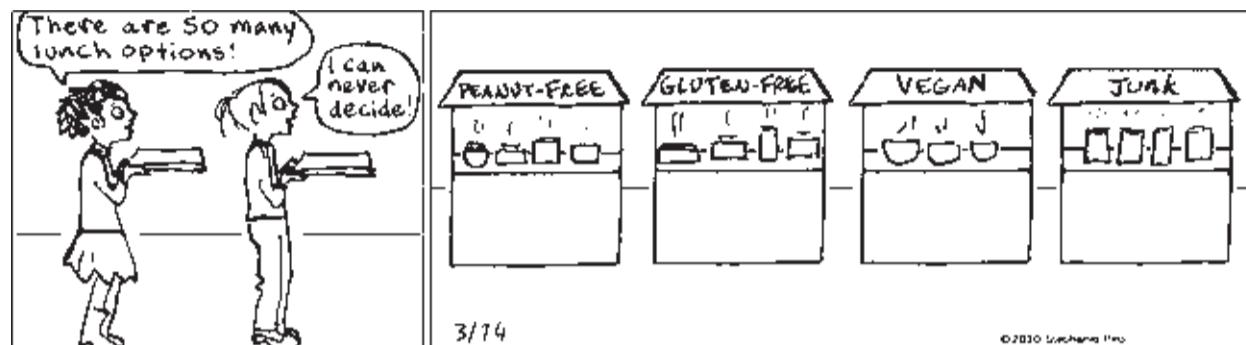
blockade and plunging oil prices. □

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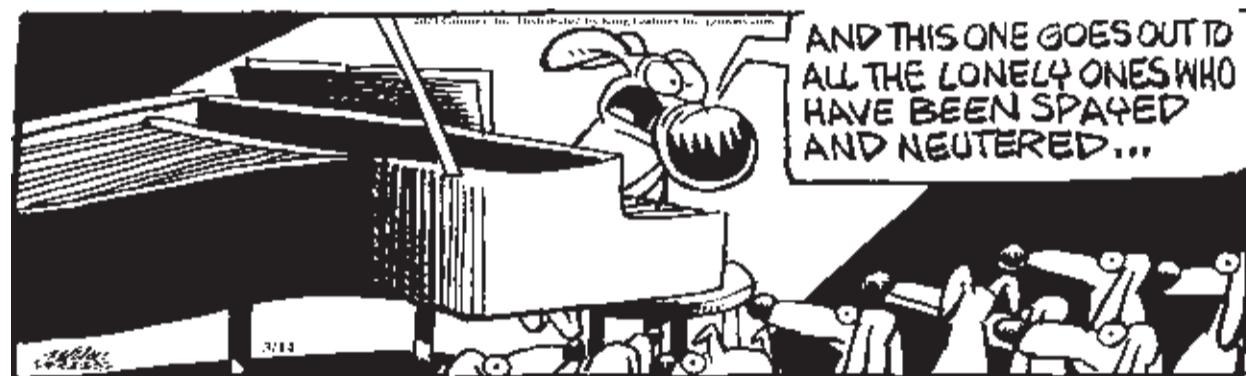
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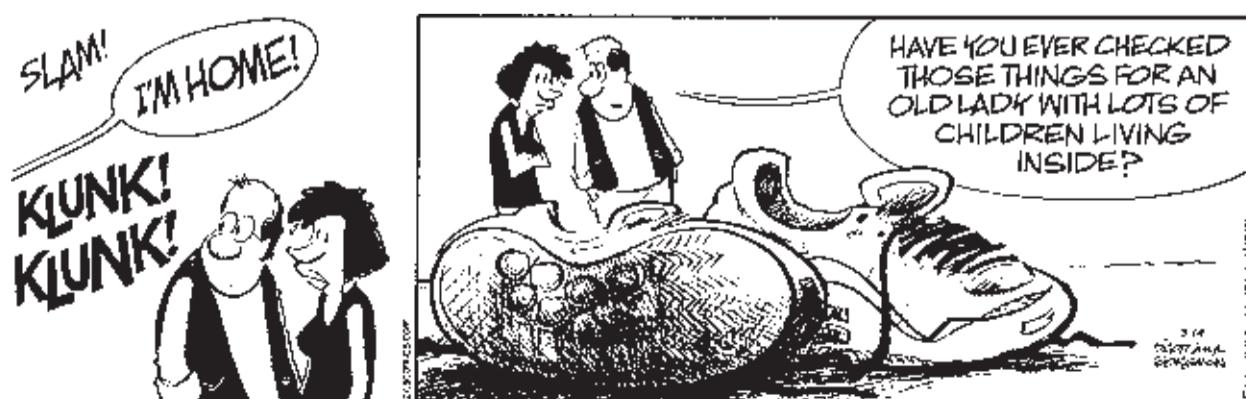
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

5			1			8
	3					
	8	9	5		1	7
9			8		3	
	6				2	
	7		6			5
6	9		4	2	5	
				6		
1		8				3

Difficulty Level ★★★★

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

2	7	5	8	9	6	1	3	4
4	6	1	2	5	3	7	9	8
8	9	3	4	7	1	2	6	5
6	2	7	9	1	8	5	4	3
1	3	4	5	6	7	9	8	2
5	8	9	3	2	4	6	7	1
3	5	2	7	4	9	8	1	6
7	4	6	1	8	2	3	5	9
9	1	8	6	3	5	4	2	7

Yesterday's puzzle answer



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

3/14/20

Friday's Puzzle Solved

CBS	OSCAR	STAY
SLOT	SHARP	TOGA
HUTS	POSTMORTEM	
YET	BRASS	REEDS
LEVEL	INA	
STEADY	STOMPS	
PANTS	TRACT	REP
EXES	WEIGH	BOOR
DEC	SHADE	VAGUE
SKATER	FAIRLY	
TAN	CASTE	
SCOOT	SHAKE	SEA
HOMIE	PLUME	ASIAN
AVOID	OILER	HERO
GETS	ITALY	ADS

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3/13/20

- 1 Teacup edges
- 6 -not; those in need
- 7 Unlocked
- 8 Agitated
- 9 Sharpish cry
- 10 On a : sightseeing
- 11 -ran; one who didn't win
- 12 there done that
- 14 Raised porch
- 21 Icy owl
- 25 Please Don't the Daises!
- 26 Sesame Street character
- 27 Cause skin irritation
- 28 One of the panels
- 29 Made clothes
- 30 Chums
- 31 North African nation
- 32 Fight off
- 33 West Side
- 35 Easy stride
- 38 Andrew & Lyndon
- 39 More delicious
- 41 Letter for Socrates
- 42 Long-tailed or Whisman
- 44 Falafel
- 45 Linear measures
- 47 Bishop's accessory
- 48 Area below the horizon
- 49 Meander
- 50 Imitated
- 52 Get ready for short
- 53 Mauna Loa's output
- 54 Neighbor of Minn
- 55 us quit
- 59 Reasonable bedtime

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3/13/20

End of telegraph era brings question: What's a telegraph?

By BRENDAN FARRINGTON

Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — The telegraph era in Florida is ending without a flash. Not even a flicker, really. It's more like a snicker.

The Florida Senate sent Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis a bill Thursday that removes an entire chapter of state law regulating the telegraph industry, including \$50 penalties for not promptly delivering messages.

In the days before hashtags, texts and FaceTime chats, telegraphs were a big deal.

Western Union completed the first transcontinental telegraph line in 1861, dealing a death blow to the struggling Pony Express, which began operations the year before. Florida laws regarding telegraphs haven't had any substantial changes since 1913, and there haven't been any court opinions involving the statutes since 1945, according to a legislative staff analysis.

And when Republican Sen. Ben Albritton presented his bill Thursday, his colleagues couldn't resist having a little fun just before he presented his closing arguments for the legislation.

"There are a number of school-age children in the West Gallery, so if Senator Albritton in his close can address what telegraphs are," said Democratic Jason Pizzo.

Democratic Sen. Jose Javier Rodriguez quickly piled on. "There are also middle-aged people in the entire Capitol. Can you also explain to us what a telegraph is?" Rodriguez said.

Stifling his laughter, Albritton carried on.

"I appreciate the opportunity to clarify what telegraphs were."

Just Google it," Albritton said. "Next year we're going after carrier pigeons and Morse code."

The bill passed unanimously. If DeSantis signs the bill, the telegraph regulations will be removed from law on July 1. Until then, telegraph operators can still be held liable for any mental anguish or physical suffering caused by a delayed delivery of a message. □



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Scientist links 2 state outbreaks with genetic fingerprints

By CARLA K. JOHNSON

AP Medical Writer

SEATTLE (AP) — A U.S. scientist is helping public health authorities understand and track the coronavirus, turning up clues about how it arrived and spread through Washington state and beyond, including potentially seeding an outbreak on the Grand Princess cruise ship.

Washington's governor banned large public events in three counties on Wednesday, a strategy guided by the work of Trevor Bedford and his colleagues, who have estimated there are currently 1,100 active cases in the state, most of them undiscovered by testing.

Like a detective studying fingerprints, Bedford uses the genetic code the virus leaves behind. The dots he connects are mutations in the genetic alphabet of the virus, a 30,000-letter string that changes at the rate of one letter every 15 days. Those tiny mutations don't change the virus' effect on people, but they do allow scientists to draw conclusions about how it spreads from person to person. After a person gets tested for the virus with nasal and throat swabs, a small bit of the specimen can be used to rapidly sequence the virus' genome. That work has been happening, not just in Seattle, but in other labs around the world. Scientists are sharing their results on a public platform where they've been sharing influenza genome data since 2008.

This week, Bedford's lab at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center worked with California researchers to find links between a cluster of cases in the Seattle area and the



In this Feb. 7, 2019 photo provided by the Fred Hutch News Service, Trevor Bedford, a computational biologist at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, poses at the center in Seattle.

Associated Press

outbreak on the Grand Princess cruise ship in California.

"They all are very similar genetically," Bedford told The Associated Press. "It seems very possible" that virus from the Washington outbreak made it onto the Grand Princess.

Dr. Charles Chiu at the University of California, San Francisco, agreed. He provided genome sequencing of seven samples from infected passengers who got off the Grand Princess this week. An eighth sample from an earlier Grand Princess cruise to Mexico had ties to Washington state, Chiu said, and that person likely seeded the outbreak among passengers on board as the ship left for Hawaii.

"The simplest explanation," Chiu said, is that the earlier Grand Princess passenger had been in Washington state and then seeded the cruise ship outbreak.

There's an alternative ex-

planation, Chiu said. A cruise passenger or crew member was infected in another country, coincidentally by a virus with the same mutations as the Washington state cases. "Common sense tells you it more likely came from Washington," Chiu said. For most people, the coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia. The vast majority of people recover within a few weeks. Based on genome sequencing of 18 Washington state cases, Bedford believes the state outbreak began with one person,

perhaps the 35-year-old man who was the first known U.S. case. The coronavirus infection rate in the Seattle Flu Study, a project mapping seasonal flu, indicates there could be 1,100 active COVID-19 infections in the state, although because of limitations in the modeling that number could range from as low as 210 to as high as 2,800 active infections. Health authorities tried to trace all the people who had contact with the first U.S. case, a resident of Snohomish County, north of Seattle, who had visited Wuhan, the Chinese city that was the initial epicenter of the outbreak. He landed at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport on Jan. 15 and started feeling sick the

next day. On Jan. 19, he visited a clinic in and was hospitalized on Jan. 20.

"They did very aggressive contact tracing looking to identify anybody who had had contact with that initial case and sort of concentric circles outward," Dr. Nancy Messonnier of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Wednesday. She called Bedford's work "an interesting hypothesis," but said the outbreak could have been caused by "a secondary seeding."

Kristian Andersen, a genetic epidemiologist at Scripps Research in La Jolla, California, agreed that the virus was introduced to Washington state by one person and suggested that the active cases probably exceed 1,100. Neither of the conclusions Bedford described is a surprise, he said in an email.

"The United States has completely failed to prepare for the pandemic — despite having adequate time — and we currently have one of the lowest capacity for COVID-19 testing," he wrote. "This continues to be an enormous problem and it is highly likely that we are currently missing the vast majority of cases occurring across the country." "Unless our ability to detect cases is transformed within days and aggressive strategies for responses are put in place, within a couple of weeks, we are going to find ourselves in a situation that is very similar to the one currently unfolding in Italy," Andersen wrote. □

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Review: Vin Diesel in the bruising 'Bloodshot'

By JAKE COYLE
Associated Press

It might be too harsh to recommend practicing social distancing with the new Vin Diesel movie "Bloodshot," but I wouldn't want to shake its hand, either.

David S. F. Wilson's film comes not from Marvel or DC but the pages of Valiant Comics. Its central character, a former soldier named Ray Garrison (Diesel), is brought back to life with nanotechnology that gives him superhuman strength and the ability to immediately be healed by microscopic robots. He awakes to a muscleman's dream, lifting enormous barbells and trading a punching bag for a concrete pillar. What could be better? Well, the downsides include the haunting memory of the murder of Garrison's wife and the eventual realization that his creator, Dr. Emil Harting (Guy Pearce, classing up the joint), can turn him off with a switch. But when he's in action, Garrison is something like a hulking Terminator who rapidly reassembles when shot or exploded, just without the sunglasses or snappy catch phrases.

There's a dull thud to "Bloodshot," a bruising action movie that can't equal its brawn with brains. It's a high-tech "Frankenstein" that cobbles together the sci-fi concepts of various previous movies before it. Wilson, a visual effects expert making his directorial debut, films the actions sequences in a vague, disorienting blur, sometimes slowing things down in shots of grim brutality. One, in a darkened tunnel, is shot amid a crimson glow and a clouds of powdery white (from a flour truck). Diesel doesn't bring any dramatic heft to the part but he makes a mean bullet of a man. "Bloodshot" is, at least, a little more interesting than it initially appears. It begins to reflect back on itself, questing what's real and what isn't. Pearce's Harting turns out

to be as much a film director as a mad scientist, compiling digital worlds and plot lines for his creations. ("It was all a simulation" has officially replaced "It was all a dream" in the movies.) And there is somewhere here a salient metaphor for the plight of soldiers returning home from war with prosthetic limbs and forced

to make for themselves strange new lives. Along the way, a few actors give it a pulse. Eiza González, as the also-enhanced KT, is compelling enough that the movie feels like it should have gravitated from Garrison to her. Lamorne Morris just about steals the movie as the brilliant but goofy coder Wilfred Wigans. □



This image released by Columbia Pictures shows Vin Diesel in a scene from "Bloodshot."

Associated Press

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Passengers sit in a mostly empty sightseeing bus on Hollywood Boulevard, Thursday, March 12, 2020, in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles.

Associated Press

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Coronavirus brings entertainment world to a standstill

By JAKE COYLE

AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The entertainment industry prepared Thursday for an unprecedented shutdown to curb the spread of the coronavirus, canceling upcoming movies, suspending all Broadway performances and scuttling concert tours until it's safe to welcome crowds back.

To accommodate calls for social distancing, Hollywood moved to pause the normal hum of TV productions and the bustle of red-carpet movie premieres. After New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo banned gatherings of more than 500 people, Broadway theaters announced that they would close immediately and remain dark through April 12.

The Tribeca Film Festival was called off too.

The closures amount to a nearly complete halting of the industry, from Lincoln Center to Disneyland, and the largest-scale shutdown of many of the country's major arteries of culture.

The Metropolitan Opera at Lincoln Center, the New York Philharmonic, Carnegie Hall, the Apollo Theater and the Kennedy Center in Washington all canceled events through March 31. Live Nation Entertainment and AEG Presents, the world's largest live-entertainment companies, suspended all current tours through March, including those of Billie Eilish, the Strokes and Post Malone.

The dawning awareness of the virus' reach had already forced the cancellation or postponement of all major imminent events on the calendar, including the sprawling South by Southwest conference and festival in Austin, Texas; Hollywood's annual movie expo CinemaCon, in Las Vegas; this month's Kids Choice Awards in Los Angeles; and the sunny California music festival Coachella, which was put off until October. TV networks saw the scuttling of most major sporting events, including the NBA

season, March Madness and the NHL season.

Earlier Thursday, California urged bans of not just the largest events but also gatherings of more than 250 to help stymie the virus' spread. California Gov. Gavin Newsom recommended the cancellation or postponement of gatherings of 250 or more people through at least the end of the month. That put a new focus on Broadway, multiplexes and concert venues.

Disneyland plans to shut its gates Saturday for the rest of the month. After Sunday, Florida's Disney World will also close to guests through the end of March. And Disney is suspending any new cruise ship departures starting Saturday.

Beginning Saturday, the Universal Studios theme park in Los Angeles will close until at least March 28. Universal Studios in Orlando plans to shutter for the rest of the month starting Monday.

Hollywood still planned to usher several new movies into theaters beginning Thursday evening. North American's largest chains, AMC and Regal, did not respond to emails. Cinemas have already been closed in China, India, Italy, Poland, Greece and other countries.

But they will soon run out of movies to play. Postponements have erased much of the upcoming movie release calendar.

The Walt Disney Co. wiped out its upcoming slate, including "Mulan," "New Mutants" and "Antlers." Universal Pictures said the "Fast and Furious" movie titled "F9" would not open May 22 as planned but in April next year. John Krasinski, writer and director of "A Quiet Place 2," announced that his film from Paramount Pictures would not open next week as planned but be rescheduled to for another date.

Across Hollywood, the usual machinations of show business, from auditions to rehearsals, ground to a halt.

Apple's "The Morning Show" was among the many productions put on hiatus. Central Casting closed its offices. The TCM Classic Film festival, scheduled next month in Los Angeles was canceled. Leading talent agents closed their offices and sent agents home to work.

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame postponed its annual induction ceremony, scheduled for May 2 in Cleveland. It was to have been televised live for the first time by HBO. Posthumous inductees Whitney Houston and the Notorious B.I.G. were to be honored, along with Depeche Mode, the Doobie Brothers, Nine Inch Nails and T. Rex. Canada's top music awards show, the Juno Awards, was also called off as a precaution.

The announcement Wednesday evening that Tom Hanks and his wife, Rita Wilson, had tested positive for coronavirus sent shudders through the industry. Hanks was easily the most famous person yet to publicly announce that he had the virus. He was in Australia to shoot an Elvis Presley biopic that Warner Bros. said would halt production. Hanks posted a photo on Instagram late Thursday, saying he and Wilson remain in isolation and that they are taking it "one-day-at-a-time."

In a nod to his manager role in "A League of Their Own," Hanks concluded his post: "Remember, despite all the current events, there is no crying in baseball."

On Thursday, "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" and "The Late Show With James Corden" joined other late-night talk shows in announcing they will tape without audiences. That followed similar decisions by CBS' "The Late Show With Stephen Colbert," NBC's "Tonight Show" and "Late Night With Seth Meyers," Comedy Central's "The Daily Show with Trevor Noah," HBO's "Last Week Tonight with John Oliver" and TBS' "Full Frontal with Samantha Bee." □

Coronavirus compels telecommuting, travel limits for media

By DAVID BAUDER

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The Washington Post is encouraging its staff to work at home and the Los Angeles Times is restricting air travel, two illustrations of how news organizations compelled to cover the coronavirus outbreak are balancing the need to keep employees safe.

Both of those directives went out in memos to staff members on Tuesday. CNN also said that, as of now, its planned Democratic presidential debate Sunday between Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders is on — though it will take place without a live audience.

Washington Post Publisher and CEO Fred Ryan said the Post was encouraging, but not mandating, telecommuting for newsroom personnel if their jobs or needs for equipment permitted it. The policy is in place at least through the end of the month.

"It's a smart thing to do to minimize or eliminate what could go wrong here," said Cameron Barr, a Post managing editor. The newspaper had preparedness plans in place, and technology allows most employees to stay connected remotely. The newsroom won't be empty, since some editors and other staff will remain.

Ryan said the newspaper would continue to operate at "full scale" despite the dispersed employees.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia. The vast majority of people recover from the new virus. According to the World Health Organization, people with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover. In mainland China, where the virus first exploded, more



This June 22, 2019 file photo shows the exterior of the New York Times building in New York. Media companies are balancing the need to cover the coronavirus outbreak with the need to keep their employees safe.

Associated Press

than 80,000 people have been diagnosed and more than 58,000 have so far recovered.

The Los Angeles Times said it was suspending air travel for staff members except in cases where it is "absolutely" required for the job, according to a memo sent by Executive Editor Norman Pearlstine on Tuesday. Those who do have to fly will be asked to work from home for two weeks after their flight, he said.

Exceptions will likely include coverage of sports teams or presidential campaign coverage, said a senior editor at the newspaper who spoke on condition of anonymity because the person was not authorized to discuss the plans publicly. Some reevaluations are taking place; this weekend's debate will likely be covered off television instead of by a reporter on site, the editor said.

Staff members have been given the option to work from home if they can, subject to their manager's OK, the Los Angeles Times said. The New York Times told its

employees this week that if they want to work remotely they can do so, "and many have taken us up on the offer," a spokeswoman said. Remote working is not always an option. NBC News, primarily a television news organization, did not mention telecommuting in a coronavirus memo sent to staff Tuesday. The network said it was stepping up cleaning of its facilities and making more sanitizers available. Bloomberg News said it is requiring its employees in China, Hong Kong, South Korea and Italy to work from home, and recommending that its workers in Seattle, Washington, do the same. Other employees who want to telecommute must make arrangements with their supervisors, a spokesperson said. The Associated Press said it expects its employees to come to work but is dealing with individual concerns on a case-by-case basis. AP journalists are not expected to go to hospitals or the homes of people infected by coronavirus, a spokeswoman said. □

Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Charles Wuorinen dies at 81

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) —

Charles Wuorinen, winner of the 1970 Pulitzer Prize in Music and composer of the operas "Brokeback Mountain" and "Haroun and the Sea of Stories," died from injuries sustained in a fall last September. He was 81.

Wuorinen, who composed more than 270 works, died Wednesday at New York-Presbyterian/Columbia University Medical Center, spokeswoman Aleba Gartner said Thursday.

Known for much of his career as an admirer of the 12-tone system of composition, Wuorinen was opinionated.

"We have a world in which the instant response of the untutored becomes the sole criterion for judgment," he told The New York Times in 1988, ahead of his 50th birthday. "A great work like a Beethoven symphony becomes like a blob of toothpaste. There is the bored orchestra. There are the indifferent audiences. They wait it through. They applaud. They leave."

Just two years ago, he decried the awarding of that year's Pulitzer Prize in Music to hip-hop artist Kendrick Lamar, telling the Times that signaled "the final disappearance of any societal interest in high culture."

Born in New York on June 9, 1938, Wuorinen's father, John, was chairman of Columbia University's history department. Wuorinen received a bachelor's degree from Columbia in 1961 and a master's in music two years later.

He won the New York Philharmonic's Young Composers' Award when he was 16 and premiered a choral work "O Filii et Filiae (Sons and Daughters)" at Town Hall in 1954.



This 1970 file photo shows Charles Wuorinen, 1969 Pulitzer Prize-winning American composer of contemporary classical music.

Associated Press

Wuorinen was 32 when he won the Pulitzer for "Time's Encomium," a four-channel work for synthesized sound that became the first electronic composition to earn the honor.

His work was cerebral. "Haroun," based on a children's novel by Salman Rushdie and with a libretto by James Fenton, premiered at the New York City Opera in 2004. It opened with references to Boccaccio, Proust, Tolstoy and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Actions that befuddle were called "P2C2E" — "a Process Too Complicated to Explain." The chorus sang out: "This is minimalism," prompting the audience to a laugh.

"Brokeback," based on a short story by Annie Proulx about two cowboys in love, was first adapted into a movie and then an opera. It was commissioned by New York City Opera but moved to Madrid's Teatro Real and premiered in 2014 after City Opera filed for bankruptcy.

"It is very beautiful, as the film shows," Wuorinen told The Associated Press, "but it is definitely not sentimental. It is not a romantic landscape. It's a deadly one — it's dangerous." □

Talking to kids about virus? Experts say be calm and honest

By CLAUDIA LAUER

Associated Press

It was a routine game of schoolyard tag — except the children had dubbed this version “coronavirus.” The kids ran around and tagged one another, but instead of being “it,” they “caught” the virus.

Children like the ones a reporter saw playing recently at a school in Washington, D.C., are becoming more aware of the coronavirus — though they may not fully understand it or know how seriously to take it — as it begins to affect their daily lives with school closures and event cancellations, restrictions on travel, and the NBA nixing the rest of its season.

Many parents are now deciding how to talk to their children about the virus. Some said they are checking in daily, while others worry talking about it could make their kids more anxious or fearful.

“We talk about it a lot. I watch the news every morning, and they’re always watching it, too,” said Nicole Poponi, mother of Clara, 10, and Jane, 12, in the Philadelphia suburb of Audubon, New Jersey. Both girls said they’ve talked a little about the virus at school, but Jane, who is a few grades ahead, said she has talked about it much more, including in science lessons.

“I’m not really as scared of it. It’s still not even that many people getting sick here. And it’s less dangerous than the flu,” Jane said. “One of my friends is really scared of it, but she’s honestly really scared of all diseases.”

Beth Young, who lives in Fort Mill, South Carolina, said she has decided to limit the conversation with her four kids, ages 8, 10, 12 and 15.

“I don’t want to doom and gloom them into being afraid of getting sick because, let’s face it, kids get sick pretty often,” she said. “And I don’t need a snuffle to turn into them worrying about dying.”

For most people — including children — the new



In this March 7, 2020 file photo, a swing sits empty on a playground outside Achievement First charter school in Providence, R.I.

Associated Press

coronavirus, which causes a disease called COVID-19, results in only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For others, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

The vast majority of people recover. According to the World Health Organization, which has declared the outbreak a pandemic, people with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover.

Child psychology experts’

advice is to be reassuring, focus on proactive steps and do research to truthfully answer children’s questions.

In Kathleen McEvoy’s house in Norton, Massachusetts, she and her husband, Thom Daly, decided they wanted to talk with their 8-year-old daughter, Kennedy, before something like a quarantine or school closure was announced.

“We thought it would be confusing and scary for a kid if they were told that school has to be closed for two weeks,” McEvoy said. “We felt like it was important ... to give her a lot of

information about how this might impact her life even if we don’t know exactly how yet.”

McEvoy, 38, works as a paraprofessional at a different school district and said some second graders had talked about how they thought the virus was spread. Some thought they could catch it from eating Chinese food or from touching bats or pigs.

The teacher spent some time searching for an age-appropriate video to help them understand how the virus is actually spread, McEvoy said.

It’s important to reassure



In this Tuesday, March 10, 2020 file photo, the playground at Lowell Elementary School in Tacoma, Wash.

Associated Press

children, to ask whether they have questions and to stress safety, said Dr. Jamie Howard, a clinical psychologist at the nonprofit Child Mind Institute. The institute and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention both offer tips on talking to children.

Some teachers and coaches are working to dispel any idea that the virus, which was first recorded in China, is tied to ethnicity or race. Seattle Public Schools posted on its website that misinformation has led to fear and hostility, and it urged students to combat racism and bias.

“We are aware of reports that some of our Asian students have been targeted and discriminated against in connection to COVID-19.

This is unacceptable and contrary to our values of racial equity and social justice,” district leaders wrote. Lacy Hilbrich’s two daughters, ages 14 and 18, are part of an online school that has students from all over the world. They live near Houston, but some of her daughters’ classmates are in countries where there are quarantines in place.

The virus, she said, has been part of her family’s daily discussion.

“In our family we all talk about it, so it’s pretty open and so they’re not hiding anything from us,” said daughter Ally, 14. “And I think that’s helped a lot.”

Parents should explain that measures like wearing face masks and closing schools are preventative and temporary, Howard said. She urged them to take a page from Mister Rogers, who taught kids to “focus on the helpers” — what doctors, teachers, parents and scientists are doing to keep them safe. Whatever the conversation looks like, Howard said, parents should not collude in their child’s anxiety by refusing to go outside or by buying masks. “In doing those behaviors, you’re saying this is really dangerous and we really are in danger right now,” she said. “And that’s not true, and it will make them more anxious.” □